

# A GLOBAL POWER: AMERICA SINCE THE AGE OF ROOSEVELT

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Second Edition

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## Preface

During World War II the United States became a global power; it has remained one ever since. For more than thirty years, the United States has tried to control world events—to both promote and prevent change. These efforts have profoundly affected all aspects of American life, from the performance of the economy to relations among the races. More than ever before, American history since World War II has been a history of the interaction between domestic and foreign affairs.

World War II was more than a chronological dividing line in American history; it was also a powerful force, and was largely responsible for the change in America's relations with the rest of the world. From 1941 to 1945, the United States was forced to participate in military affairs and diplomacy. American power increased sufficiently so that the nation was able to play its global role with some effectiveness. And the war affected American thinking about the nation's behavior in the world. Following the war, the people who governed the nation had, in

their view, learned the "lessons of history," and they were the lessons taught by the history they had experienced since World War I—especially the "appeasement" at Munich in 1938. Influenced by a "Munich analogy," American leaders believed that the United States had to function actively and forcefully in world affairs. Isolation must not be resumed, for isolation during the interwar period was the great mistake that led to the massive tragedy of World War II.

Another major turning point in American history may be approaching, and the United States may stop playing the global role that has dominated its history for more than three decades. As other nations have become stronger, American power has declined. Furthermore, American thinking has been affected by a new set of experiences. The nation's failure in Vietnam seems just as meaningful to many Americans as the failure of isolationism seemed earlier. A "Vietnam analogy" now competes with the Munich analogy, and it may dominate policy when a new generation, largely untouched by World War II but profoundly affected by Vietnam, comes to power. As Munich and related events taught that isolationism and appeasement were dangerous, Vietnam seems to be teaching that involvement, especially military involvement, is also dangerous.

This book, then, deals with a phase of American history that may soon come to an end. That phase began with the emergence of a new America nearly four decades ago, an America that differed from the earlier nation in some important ways, especially in its power and role in world affairs. It will come to an end if the nation stops functioning as a global power. Certain signs suggest that such a change lies ahead. Other signs suggest that the new America will differ not only from the America of the recent past but from any that preceded it.

As is customary in writing a book, while developing this one, I accumulated debts to people. I am grateful to them for their help. They include David C. Follmer, Robin A. Leavitt, and June Smith of Alfred A. Knopf. David encouraged me to undertake the project; Robin helped it along; and June made many improvements in my work. R. Jackson Wilson of Smith College, James Gilbert of the University of Maryland, and Barry Karl of the University of Chicago assisted by suggesting changes; most of the suggestions triumphed over my stubbornness and affected the final draft. My wife and sons contributed both by doing so

much to make my life a happy one and by teaching me about various parts of American life. The dedication of the book to my sons reflects my love and admiration as well as my sense of the challenges facing them and their peers. And I am grateful also to many students of recent history during more than two decades of teaching the subject at Wesleyan University, the University of Missouri, Columbia, and Indiana University, Bloomington. They enriched my life in many ways.

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*For Tom, Andy, and Ted  
with hope for them  
and their generation*

## PART I

### THE NEW AMERICA OF FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT

In the late summer 1945, the United States was, in effect, a new nation. The events of the 1930s and the first half of the 1940s—the Great Depression, the New Deal, World War II—had changed the nation significantly. Two changes were especially obvious and important: American capitalism became much more highly collectivized—more highly organized, centralized, and managed—and the nation became a global power. Pressures for other changes, including change in race relations, gained strength. Although anticapitalistic and antidemocratic revolutions or military defeat had seemed possible, they had *not* taken place. Still, the America of 1945 differed significantly from the America of 1929.

The New Deal changed the structure of American capitalism. While some Americans of the 1930s hoped, and others feared, that capitalism would be replaced, Franklin Roosevelt did not abolish capitalism. In fact, his New Deal protected and maintained it at a time when its very existence seemed threatened by economic disaster. Instead, the government came to the rescue of American business. And most politically active Americans approved. They were less radical than the left hoped for or the right feared. And they might have behaved differently if they had not assumed that reform could make capitalism work satisfactorily—and if a reform movement and leader had not emerged. The potential for radicalism held

out by the Great Depression was undercut by the New Deal, which performed a conservative, antirevolutionary function that was a political success.

Furthermore, the New Deal did not reduce the size or power of business corporations. The inability of the Roosevelt administration to decide *how* it should reform America helped "big business" survive. A conflict over economic policy that had been going on since the rise of industrial America continued throughout the decade, both inside and outside the administration. At the center of the conflict was the question of what to do about "monopolies." The New Deal, and the American people in general, gave conflicting answers that ranged from destruction of big business to cooperation with it. As the battle raged, large business organizations continued to function and even to prosper.

Because it was committed to capitalism, the Roosevelt administration did not try to break with the American past. But it did not accept in totality the system as it had evolved by 1933. Thus, the administration was determined to make changes, and those changes, such as those in American agriculture, were some of the New Deal's most important accomplishments.

Farming was extremely depressed in 1933, and New Dealers worked to raise farm prices and restore profits to the farm business. They attempted to do even more. They tried to fit the farmer into the collectivistic capitalism that had been developing for half a century, which involved major roles for large organizations, both public and private, in the operations of the economy. The farmer was encouraged to organize just as other businessmen organized, and to regulate production just as powerful corporations did. Above all, the New Deal made government much more important in the farmer's life. Public organizations like the Agricultural Adjustment Administration and the Soil Conservation Service became active in rural America. The farmer was encouraged to move with, rather than against, the development of a collectivistic type of capitalism, and so he did. He came out of the 1930s less independent and more dependent on others than he had been before the New Deal.

An even greater change in American society was the substantial strengthening of organized labor. The New Deal functioned as an effective promoter of labor's growth, and the move-



ment nearly tripled in size from 1933 to 1940, growing from well below 3 million union members to nearly 9 million. Some of the unions achieved recognition only and were not engaged in collective bargaining, and most wage earners remained unorganized; nevertheless, a significant change had taken place. Labor-management relations differed greatly after the 1930s from what they had been earlier. Management had lost a substantial amount of control over the work force.

The New Deal also enlarged the size of the federal government and its power in economic affairs. Federal expenditures more than tripled from 1930 to 1940, moving from \$3.1 billion to \$9.6 billion. The number of employees on the regular payroll increased by nearly 50 percent, and, if people employed in job-relief programs are included, the increase was at least 400 percent.

In the end, too much power remained in the hands of business to call the New Deal a revolution; but enough power had been shifted to government and labor to regard the New Deal as a significant factor of change. The New Deal had, to some degree, demoted business organizations and their leaders, placing new restrictions on their activities and reducing their importance in the total scheme of things in the United States. The power of business organizations could now be limited more effectively by the power of government and the power of labor.

With the advent of World War II, the structure of the American economy continued the trends that emerged in the 1930s. The size and cost of the federal government increased enormously, as did its role in the economy. In 1945, government spending reached \$95.2 billion. The war also stimulated the growth of business firms, especially those that were already large, for they received most of the contracts from Washington for the production of war supplies. Labor organizations also grew in response to wartime conditions, with union membership rising to nearly 15 million in 1945. Thus, the economy became even more highly collectivized. By 1945, it was dominated by the interplay among large public and private organizations—above all, federal agencies, large corporations, and labor unions.

These developments, however, did not represent a radical break with the past. But one aspect did represent something quite new: the emergence of the military as an important part of the economic system. Clearly, it existed and had ties with the

business firms that supplied the goods it needed. But the military had only been a small feature of American life during the 1930s; and the complex composed of the military establishment and its suppliers had been only a minor part of the economic system. That complex grew dramatically during the war, and some officials hoped it would remain important after peace came.

Although structural developments were important, wartime changes in the performance of the system were even more impressive. The performance was not perfect. The system did not provide as much military production as military leaders desired, and it produced more inflation than leaders in the administration wanted. The list of successes, however, was imposing. Production levels were adequate for the accomplishment of the major task: the defeat of Italy, Germany, and Japan. There was much less inflation than the nation had experienced during World War I. And the production of consumer goods moved above prewar levels despite the great demands placed upon the economy by the war.

For the American people, the war was an economically stimulating rather than an economically destructive force. War-time fiscal policy and the response of American business to it moved the economy firmly out of the depression (which the public and private policies of the 1930s had softened but not cured). The gross national product jumped from \$99.7 billion in 1940 to \$211.9 billion in 1945, employment increased by nearly 40 percent, and unemployment ceased to be a problem. During this time of rapid economic recovery and growth, millions of people moved above the poverty line, and millions moved into the middle classes.

As these statistics show, the war was a source of economic progress and, consequently, of growing confidence in the existing economic system. Some people worried about the future, fearing that when wartime spending stopped, wartime shipments to other nations came to an end, and war plants no longer produced the materials of war, the Great Depression would return. But many Americans now believed that depressions could be avoided. The war had strengthened confidence in fiscal policy, persuading economists and others that if the federal government functioned wisely, the national economy could perform successfully. The lesson to be learned was that Washington must spend, tax, and borrow as the economic situation dictated; it must also

maintain access to foreign markets for American producers and consumers.

The New Deal and the war affected other aspects of American life. The war, for example, had an unsettling impact on relations between men and women. War, obviously, is a male event. Men cause it, fight it, and bring it to an end. World War II however, was a significant event for American women that changed their role and status. The change was not a revolution. Much of the past persisted. Women did not achieve equality with men in economics and politics, and old ideas about woman's "place" were not discarded. Yet, married and single women enjoyed new job opportunities that weakened the influence of old theories about them—especially that woman's proper place is in the home.

The experiences of the period also increased pressure for changes in race relations. The New Deal tolerated both discrimination and segregation in its own programs and did not enact any civil rights programs. But it provided benefits for black Americans, especially in the relief programs, and substantially increased the number of blacks in important government jobs. The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), an important product of the period, organized some of the black industrial workers. In addition, preparations for an attack upon "Jim Crow," the state and local government programs of discrimination, segregation and disenfranchisement in the South, were made during the decade. Blacks became an important factor in politics as the national parties, especially the Democratic party, realized they needed the support of black voters. The Supreme Court became more receptive to arguments by the leading civil rights pressure group, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and northern congressmen developed an interest in civil rights legislation.

For black Americans, the war significantly challenged the system of discrimination that had been established long before, and that remained in place at the beginning of the war. The defense plants and the armed forces provided blacks with new evidence of their second-class status in American society, and these experiences strengthened black determination to fight for change. The war did not, however, destroy resistance to such change. Most white Americans continued to resist change in race

relations. Nevertheless, by raising questions about the meaning of democracy and in other ways, the war did work to enlarge concern among some white Americans about race relations in the United States and to increase their interest in reforming this part of American life. While the degree of change that occurred should not be exaggerated, wartime experiences, nevertheless, strengthened the challenge to discrimination and moved the issue of civil rights to a higher place on the American agenda.

The war had its most profound effect, however, on American power throughout the world. To a large degree, the expansive nature of the economy enabled the United States to develop the two major instruments that it used to affect the behavior of other nations: massive programs of economic assistance to America's allies and a large, well-equipped American fighting force. By the end of the war, it was second to none in destructive power.

Before World War II, however, America's success in operating as a world power had been limited. Its power had been largely confined to the Western Hemisphere plus Hawaii and the Philippine Islands before World War I; and during that war, its operations had been narrowly restricted to the North Atlantic and Western Europe; and its moves at the end of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s, while quite ambitious, had been unsuccessful. Furthermore, the nation had remained predominantly unsuccessful for many months after it had been drawn into the fighting.

During the war, on the other hand, the United States became a major force in the world. It contributed significantly to the destruction of the political regimes in Italy, Germany, and Japan, the destruction of their empires, and their ability to make war. American leaders refused to compromise with the leaders of Italy, Germany, and Japan. By insisting upon total victory and unconditional surrender, the United States gained the opportunity to shape the futures of the defeated countries.

By helping to liberate the areas controlled by the Nazis, Fascists, and Japanese, the United States also gained a chance to influence developments in places like China and Western Europe. Moreover, American military forces and economic strength helped frustrate the leftist parties in these areas.

In addition, the United States successfully promoted the establishment of a new international organization, the United Nations (UN). To a large degree, this was an American idea and

an American interest. The promoters of the UN saw themselves as carrying on the effort of Woodrow Wilson and as working to change the ways that nations conducted their relations with one another and to bring international affairs into harmony with American principles.

Even while American leaders worked to change the structure of international affairs, they did not expect all the old ways to be discarded. They believed that the United States must remain influential in Latin America; and they intended to acquire territory in the Pacific to use as military bases. Administration leaders also planned to maintain a substantial military force. They expected the United States to be a major influence in the UN and to use it to create the kind of world Americans desired.

The war enlarged American power enormously but not infinitely. In China, the limits to American power were obvious. Although Roosevelt had great hopes that China would emerge as a strong democratic nation, the United States could not give the Chinese much help in their war against the Japanese and could not convert the government of Chiang Kai-shek into an effective and enlightened regime. By the end of the war, the Chinese situation was moving in a direction that Washington regarded as undesirable, even though the Japanese had lost their bid for control. The weakness, oppressiveness, and the corruption of the Chiang regime were obvious, yet the administration saw no acceptable alternative to him. The strongest alternative, and unacceptable to the United States, was the Communist force led by Mao Tse-tung.

In other parts of the world, the United States had enough strength to contribute to the weakening of Western imperialism but not enough to bring about its destruction. American leaders, including Roosevelt, frequently criticized imperialism, proposed international trusteeships as a substitute, and pressured the British on their "imperial preference system," which hampered American businessmen eager to sell goods in the British Empire. But Winston Churchill and others resisted such pressures. In addition, desire for cooperation with the British and fear of some of the revolutionary leaders in the colonial world restrained American leaders, persuading them that they must work cautiously against imperialism. American influence as an anti-imperial force was also restricted by the ways in which American armies were used against the Japanese, for the nation concen-



*Global Diplomacy: Roosevelt with Churchill and Stalin at Yalta, February 1945  
(Courtesy, Franklin D. Roosevelt Library)*

trated its forces in the Philippines and other Pacific islands, deployed only small numbers to the Asian mainland, and, thus, did not become the dominant power there.

American power in Western Europe had limits, too. The United States contributed significantly to the liberation of France, but the American leaders were not fully satisfied with the new French government. They worked closely with the British during the war, but were distressed by the triumph of the left in British politics at the end of the war.

Limits to American power were especially apparent in Eastern Europe. While the war inflicted severe damage on the Russian people, their armed forces, and their economy, it also created an important opportunity for Russia. Josef Stalin and his aides seized the opening created by the movement of armies in Eastern Europe to shape political developments there. The United States tried to influence Russian behavior in the region but could do very little because, unlike Russia, it did not have troops in Eastern Europe.

By the end of the war, the future was filled with uncertainties. It appeared that the nation now knew how to avoid a

depression, but it was not certain that it would do so. Pressure for change in race relations seemed likely to persist, but the success that it would enjoy could not be predicted. The American people would surely continue to play a large role in the world, but just how large the role would be and just how it would be played awaited definition. The United States could operate chiefly within the United Nations, or it could rely mainly on its own power. The nation could expect to continue to influence developments elsewhere, but victory at every point was not guaranteed.

Although the future was uncertain, as futures always are, Americans knew that their recent past has been extremely significant. World War II had been a time of great changes—at home, and even more spectacularly, in the nation's relations with the rest of the world. The United States had increased its power, shaping political developments in many places, and had promoted the establishment of the UN to modify the ways in which nations conducted their affairs. Yet, the war had not made the United States all-powerful. By late summer 1945, the limited nature of American power was especially obvious in Eastern Europe.

The nation had not made a complete break with the past. Many old parts of American life, including the basic political and economic institutions, remained in place. American leaders had, in fact, deliberately preserved those institutions, protecting them against serious challenges at home and abroad, and the American people had resisted change as well as demanded it.

Yet, the United States in 1945 differed significantly from what it had been in 1929. Two major crises had occurred and changed the nation. Its economy was more highly collectivized; its role and power in the world were much larger. The fast-moving, action-packed Roosevelt years had also made the economic system much more productive and had affected race relations and other important aspects of American life, including the status of women and the role of the military. Americans could still debate about their relations with one another and with other people or about their institutions, but the debates of the future would take place under conditions largely influenced by the years of crisis and change from 1929 to 1945. A new America had developed—an America reshaped by the Great Depression and World War II.





### THE COLD WAR AND CONTAINMENT

Most Americans hoped that victory in war would reestablish a “normal” life. Normal meant emphasis upon life inside the United States. They did not wish to return to the economically depressed 1930s, although some feared they might. They hoped the prosperity that had come with the war would continue and grow, and it did. Freed from the need to make sacrifices for the nation, they hoped to enjoy the new economic abundance. Liberals had plans that they thought would improve American life and hoped now to have ample opportunity to carry them out. They hoped that reform would once again become a major feature of American politics. But, although some reforms were made, Americans did not have the time for domestic affairs that they had anticipated. They continued to play a large time- and resource-consuming role in world affairs. As most leaders in Washington hoped, the United States continued to function as a global power in the postwar years. It did so because of the “lessons” that had been learned and because a “cold war” quickly moved into the place once occupied by the hot war of 1939–1945, becoming the dominant feature of world affairs.

The postwar years of Harry Truman’s presidency were dominated by foreign affairs to a degree that was without precedent in American history. During this period, Washington developed a foreign policy—a policy built around the idea of the “containment” of Communism—that strongly influenced Ameri-

can life in subsequent years. The Truman years were abnormal years; they were creative years. Creativity, however, was largely limited to the realm of foreign policy.

The Truman administration was, in short, a highly significant administration in the history of American foreign relations. Rather than reduce the nation's role in the world, the administration continued to use American power—both economic and military power—to influence and control events far from the nation's borders. It is in the area of foreign policy that Harry S. Truman's chief historical significance lies. He could not accomplish as much at home.

The Republicans that came to power in 1953 were instruments of continuity, not effective sources of change. Although the Eisenhower administration made some efforts to break with the past, and frequently talked as though new things were being done, it did not destroy Roosevelt's New Deal or Truman's containment policy.

The Truman administration shaped the initial American response to the postwar situation, and that response continued to be *the* American foreign policy even after the Democrats were displaced by a Republican administration. An active and expensive foreign policy, containment triumphed over several challenges to become the "bipartisan" foreign policy of the United States. By the mid-1950s, it seemed to most Americans that containment was the policy that the United States must pursue in the cold war.

# Chapter 1

## The Origins of Containment

The cold war followed closely on the heels of World War II, and containment, developed in 1947–1948, was the Truman administration's response to the new situation in world affairs. The cold war emerged as a process of interaction between the United States and Russia, both governed by men convinced they had learned the “lessons” taught by World War II and the background to it. Ambitious and costly in comparison to prewar policies or wartime plans for the postwar period, containment sought to check the expansion of Russia and Communism and contributed to the further escalation of the cold war.

The cold war is easier to describe than to explain. It centered on Russian-American conflict, but that had been present in varying degrees since the Communist revolution of 1917. It involved nonviolent conflict, which distinguished it from the customary view of war. (Fighting did erupt during the cold war, but the United States and Russia did not fight directly against one another.) The cold war was so intense a conflict that it dominated the relationship between the two countries. Moreover, its impact was felt by virtually all other nations, imposing pressure on them to take sides.

Both ideological and economic differences contributed to the emergence of the cold war but did not fully explain it. The struggle between Communism and capitalism had long been present in the relations between Russia and the United States and

had not prevented the two from cooperating in some important ways during World War II. The economic clash was somewhat more concrete. Russian policy was based on controlling the economies of neighboring nations. For the most part, the United States pursued an "open door" policy, maintaining that every nation, through trade and investment, ought to be free to penetrate the economies of other nations in the world. Yet, similar policy disagreements between Great Britain and the United States did not produce a cold war. The British were now too weak and too dependent upon the Americans to permit conflict to characterize their relationship.

Motivated by economic interest and belief in their own ideology, American leaders did hope to reshape the world. As Truman defined American aims, the United States was seeking a world in which "all peoples who are prepared for self-government should be permitted to choose their own form of government by their own freely expressed choice, without any interference from any foreign source." His words recognized that an anticolonial movement was gaining strength throughout the world. He endorsed that movement but also expressed a hope that it would not go forward too rapidly. The vision encompassed liberal economic arrangements as well as democratic political practices. All nations, Truman insisted, must "have access on equal terms to the trade and raw materials of the world."

Administration leaders believed that all nations should have a high degree of economic freedom. They should not use the powers of government to manage their economies in extensive ways; they should not engage in experiments with economic nationalism such as they had in the 1930s. (The philosophy contained criticism of American businessmen who believed in high protective tariffs as well as foreign advocates of government-controlled economies.) "Our foreign relations, political and economic, are indivisible," Truman argued. "We cannot say that we are willing to cooperate in the one field and are unwilling to cooperate in the other."

The administration's vision assumed that the world was composed of interdependent parts. National economies depended upon one another, and politics rested upon economics. According to Truman, "we ourselves cannot enjoy prosperity in a world of economic stagnation," and "economic

distress, anywhere in the world, is a fertile breeding ground for violent political upheaval." His advisers suggested that "if we permit free enterprise to disappear in other nations of the world, the very existence of our own democracy will be threatened."

Although American practices often conflicted with American principles, the administration in the early postwar years tried to implement this vision of a new world, hoping that eventually it would become reality. Washington not only provided support for the United Nations, which soon established its headquarters in New York City, but also for an International Trade Organization. The administration renewed the reciprocal trade agreements program that had been championed by Roosevelt's Secretary of State Cordell Hull, a strong advocate of free-flowing trade among nations as *the* way of promoting peace and prosperity. The administration criticized economic nationalism and state intervention in Latin America and carried out plans for the reform and recovery of Germany and Japan, including the prosecution of wartime leaders as war criminals. In Japan, a liberal and pacifist constitution was drafted, while American forces occupied the country, and a new government, friendly to the United States, was elected. In Germany, American officials discarded plans for a harsh peace, promoting instead economic recovery for the western portion of the country. James Byrnes, a professional politician now serving as secretary of state, explained in September 1946, "Germany is part of Europe, and recovery in Europe . . . will be slow indeed if Germany is turned into a poorhouse." Along with economic recovery, American efforts were directed at heading off any move to the left in German politics. Washington wanted to construct a productive, capitalistic Germany open to trade with other nations.

Great Britain appeared to threaten the American vision. The new government, controlled by the Labour party, planned to nationalize basic industries. It also maintained the imperial preference system, established in the 1930s, that discriminated against foreign businessmen who hoped to trade in the British Empire. As part of an effort to influence policies as well as help with the task of reconstruction, the United States loaned Britain nearly \$4 billion in 1946. The British had to spend the money in the United States, and they agreed to change their trade policies so as to give American businessmen greater opportunities in the empire. However, the British looked for ways to get around the

American demands. Nevertheless, the two countries maintained the close ties that had developed during World War II and did not become adversaries in a cold war.

Obviously, ideological differences and economics were not the only forces responsible for the cold war. World War II itself was an especially important contribution. It had destroyed the power of the nations that had separated Russia and the United States, thereby providing them with new opportunities to clash with one another. It had increased the power of both nations. There can be no doubt about the war's impact on the power of the United States, but the evidence supporting the impact on Russia is more ambiguous. The war caused serious damage in the Soviet Union, taking many more lives than anywhere else and inflicting heavy economic losses, but it also gave the Russians new opportunities, especially in Eastern Europe and Germany, and they seized them. In addition, the war increased the self-confidence and sense of power of both countries, for they had triumphed over strong adversaries. Finally, the war reduced the influence of isolationism in both countries, convincing American leaders of the folly of it and persuading Russian leaders that they must control Eastern Europe and Germany in order to be secure.

The cold war emerged and escalated when it did (late 1945 and through 1946) for several reasons. The ending of the war reduced pressures on both nations to cooperate with one another. The atomic bomb that the United States had used to force the surrender of Japan increased the American leaders' sense of strength, alarmed the Russians, and also alarmed some Americans who worried about the day when Russia, as well as the United States, would have this awesome weapon. Russian behavior in Eastern Europe and Iran, where they maintained their military presence and sought to shape political developments, troubled the United States. It violated American theory of what the world should be like, seemed to violate the agreements that Roosevelt, Churchill, and Stalin had made at Yalta in February 1945, and suggested that Russia might continue to seize territory as Hitler and Japan had after their early victories. Russian pressure on Turkey in 1946 also contributed to American fears, as did rivalry over Germany. There, the two nations were locked into a system of joint control; they had promised reunification of Germany but could not agree on the terms.

Eastern Europe was the setting for most of the controversies in the early months of the cold war. Truman rejected Roosevelt's efforts to cultivate Russian friendship. He developed a "get tough" policy, insisting that he was "tired of babying the Soviets," and that Russia needed to be "faced with an iron fist and strong language," for the "only language" she understood was "how many divisions have you." The new policy was aimed at "liberating" Eastern Europe from Russian control. While it agreed with Roosevelt's objective, it found his methods to be inadequate. The objective, embodied in the Yalta agreements, was free elections but Russia refused to abide by the agreements. Truman now believed that the United States had to find a new way to make the Soviet Union honor the agreements, so that political reality in Eastern Europe could be brought into harmony with American ideals.

A former British prime minister encouraged Truman to act as he did. Speaking in Fulton, Missouri, on March 5, 1946, Winston Churchill protested against the "iron curtain" being constructed by the Soviet Union and the "very high and increasing measure of control from Moscow." He maintained that "police governments are prevailing in nearly every case, and so far, except in Czechoslovakia, there is no democracy."<sup>3</sup> Warning that Russia might establish "a pro-Communist Germany in their areas," and that Communist activity might become dangerous in Western Europe and beyond, he suggested that "this is certainly not the liberated Europe we fought to build up" and was not one "which contains the essentials of permanent peace." Based on the belief that military power is important and that the West must not repeat the mistakes of the past, Churchill called for an Anglo-American alliance, expressing confidence that a tougher approach would be successful.

Churchill's words made great sense to the president. They may, in fact, have been calculated to test public response to the policy being developed by the administration. The two men were, of course, very different in social background and experience. Churchill was an aristocrat who had held several important government positions even before becoming Britain's wartime prime minister. Truman, on the other hand, was a product of the midwestern middle class—a farmer, soldier, small businessman, and politician who had served no higher than the chairmanship of a special senatorial committee before being catapulted into the

vice-presidency and then the presidency in 1945. But Churchill's reading of recent history resembled Truman's. The former had been one of the early proponents of the historical interpretation that Truman had endorsed well before entering the White House. And now Churchill gave his "iron curtain" speech in Truman's home state with Truman on the platform. The President had, in fact, read the speech in advance.

Although "toughness" was the watchword of the Truman administration toward Russia, military encounters between the two competing nations did not take place. The Russians used troops in Eastern Europe and Iran but not beyond, while the United States used them predominantly in Italy, western Germany, and Japan, but not in areas where the Russians were present. In fact, after the fighting stopped, the United States reduced its military forces in Europe and carried through a major program of demobilization at a rapid pace. By mid-1946, the American army in Europe had dropped from 3.5 million to 500,000 men. Popular pressure to bring the boys home stimulated this development; a widely held belief that the nation could rely upon the UN for security facilitated it; and fears, which Truman shared, of large-scale government spending and deficit financing contributed to it.

Despite the decision to demobilize, and despite restraint in the actual use of military force, the administration placed a high value upon military power. Truman believed that the nation must have a powerful navy and air force and a strong army reserve "because only so long as we remain strong can we ensure peace in the world." The United States could not "on one day proclaim our intention to prevent unjust aggression and tyranny in the world, and on the next day call for immediate scrapping of our military might." American military weakness had been one of the great mistakes of the past, Truman assumed. It had encouraged aggression and war and, thus, must not be permitted now.

The United States did hold on to one powerful military force—the atomic bomb—but did not threaten to use it. The administration continued to develop and test its atomic arsenal, but American officials did not believe that the bomb should be used to force Russia out of Eastern Europe. And Washington learned rather quickly that mere possession of the bomb could not produce the desired result. Contrary to the expectations of Secretary Byrnes, among others, in the summer of 1945, the



bomb proved to be an ineffective form of pressure; it did not make Russia "more manageable." The United States made only one military move to influence Russian behavior. During 1946, it established and then enlarged a naval presence in the Eastern Mediterranean.

In the early years of the cold war American economic power did not play a major role. The United States had great economic strength, and Russia needed outside aid for reconstruction purposes. Some American officials believed that economic power should be used to exert an influence on Russian behavior, as well as to create economic opportunities for Americans; occasionally, they hinted at changes the Russians must make in order to get American economic help. Yet, the United States did not attempt to bargain over a reconstruction loan to Russia and it did provide the funds for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, an agency that distributed its resources without regard to politics. On the other hand, American economic strength was used as much as possible to influence politics in Italy, France, Great Britain, West Germany, and Japan. The United States had ended economic aid (Lend-Lease) to Russia once the fighting stopped. But Lend-Lease had been a wartime program and was ended for Great Britain and the other Allies as well. In other words, the ending of Lend-Lease was not dictated by a desire to exert economic pressure.

Despite American economic strength and Russian economic need, the United States actually had little hope of success through the exercise of economic pressure. Unlike the British, Russia was unwilling to make the promises needed to get a large reconstruction loan, a loan that had to be approved by Congress. She had other ways of financing her reconstruction. She could exploit Eastern Europe and draw reparations from Germany. In May 1946, the United States halted delivery of economic reparations from West Germany, a heavily industrialized area, but the Russians turned to substantial sources elsewhere.

In its early months, the cold war was largely a war of words. Each side hurled verbal pressure against the other. They clashed over Eastern Europe, Italy, Germany, Iran, Turkey, and other places. They sought liberation or control in Eastern Europe. Each tried to prevent control of Germany by the other. Washington delivered critical speeches and diplomatic protests, charging that the Russians violated the Yalta agreements. The administration

refused to recognize some of the new regimes in Eastern Europe. "We shall refuse to recognize any government imposed upon any nation by the force of any foreign power," Truman insisted. But he and his aides tried a softer tack, insisting, as well, that the United States wanted governments both friendly to the Soviet Union and representative of all "democratic" elements. Among other efforts, Byrnes, a veteran of the bargaining and compromising practiced in American politics, proposed to trade a four-power security treaty against Germany in exchange for Russian withdrawal from Eastern Europe. Russia regarded American interest in Eastern Europe as a threat to her security and as another attempt by capitalist nations to encircle her. She charged that Washington threatened both her and Europe, seeking, under the guise of freedom of commerce, to enslave them economically. She also criticized British policy in Greece and American policy in Japan, pointing out that while her troops were stationed only in Eastern Europe the West had troops in many places.

With each side seeking to protect itself from being destroyed by atomic weapons, clashes over atomic energy were also frequent. The United States maneuvered to prevent the Russians from developing atomic bombs, while the Russians tried to persuade the United States to destroy the atomic weapons that it already had. Washington refused to scrap its bombs or share its atomic secrets as long as it had no guarantee that the Russians would not develop their own bombs, and Moscow turned down American proposals for international inspection and control of atomic energy which would have permitted outsiders to come into their country.

The United States, then, achieved only a few of its objectives during the early months of the cold war. It was successful in Iran. When the Russians would not remove their troops as they had promised, the United States protested, moved a naval force into the Eastern Mediterranean, and threatened to send American dollars, supplies, and troops into the area. The Russians pulled their troops out. The issue in Iran, however, was oil, not security. And the United States soon gained access to that oil while the Soviet Union was denied it by the Iranian government. The Russians also relaxed pressure on Turkey after the United States expressed opposition to the Soviet Union's demands that she be allowed to establish air and naval bases in Turkey and given a share in controlling the Dardanelles.

At the same time that she increased her hold over Eastern Europe, Russia tolerated non-Communist but friendly governments—those with satisfactory foreign policies—that were established in several places, including Finland, Austria, and Hungary, and she pulled her troops out of Czechoslovakia where Communists shared power with non-Communists. In other places, however, such as East Germany, Poland, and Rumania, she tightened control, using police action to remove unfriendly politicians from office so that there would be large Communist victories at the polls.

As the cold war escalated, Truman took steps to achieve unity within his own cabinet in matters of foreign policy. In September 1946, he removed Henry Wallace, who advocated tolerating Russian behavior in Eastern Europe and renewing efforts at cooperation, as Secretary of Commerce. Wallace, a militant New Dealer from Iowa who served Roosevelt as Secretary of Agriculture and Vice-President and was displaced by Truman at the Democratic National Convention in 1944, warned that American criticism of Russian behavior was leading to war. "The tougher we get, the tougher the Russians will get," he predicted. "Our interest in establishing democracy in Eastern Europe, where democracy by and large has never existed, seems to her," he advised, "an attempt to reestablish the encirclement of unfriendly neighbors which was created after the last war and which might serve as a springboard of still another effort to destroy her." Rather than attempt to produce political change in the area, he argued, the United States should recognize Russian security needs and respect her special interests. After airing these views in a speech, Wallace was fired. His views suggested to Truman that Wallace was the kind of soft-headed person who had caused trouble in the past.

As Wallace's dismissal suggests, the cold war was in full swing by late 1946. Russian-American conflict had reached a point where it deserved a special label. Neither side had confidence in the possibility of cooperation with the other. The cold war emerged as the consequence of interaction between two powerful and ambitious nations, both of whom were convinced that history "proved" that they must behave as they were behaving. The Russians believed that they must exert a strong influence in Eastern Europe and Germany, while the Americans believed they must challenge Russian behavior in those places. Each side, in a

sense, saw the other as having moved into Hitler's shoes, and each side was convinced that it must not repeat the mistakes of the 1930s.

In 1947, the Truman administration's attention shifted from "liberation" to containment, and Washington began to draw more heavily upon American economic power to accomplish its objectives. Having failed to undo the political consequences of the movement of Russian armies in Eastern Europe during the war, the United States now sought to protect the political results of the movement of Western armies in Southern and Western Europe.

The interaction between conditions in Southern and Western Europe—economic depression and Communist pressure—and American ideas produced a new policy of containment. Despite American aid and expectations in Washington, Europe had not recovered from the war, and these economic conditions encouraged the Communists to believe that they could enlarge their power and influence. In France and Italy, the large Communist parties reversed their policy of cooperation with bourgeois governments, established at the end of the war; and in Greece, Communist-led revolutionaries waged guerrilla warfare against the Greek government. Each side in the Greek Civil War received military and economic help from outsiders, the revolutionaries from Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Albania, and the government from Great Britain. The possibility of renewed Russian pressure on Turkey was also on the horizon. The situation was further aggravated by British weakness, as demonstrated dramatically in February 1947, when the British announced that they would be forced to leave Greece by the end of March and could no longer afford to provide financial assistance to Greece and Turkey.

By now, the Truman administration had a well-defined way of looking at such developments. It involved heavy emphasis on Russia's role in the world's trouble spots. To Washington, Russia's ambitions seemed unlimited and her power substantial. By prolonging and exploiting the economic crisis created by the war, she appeared eager and able to draw Southern and Western Europe into her empire, thus moving toward her goal of world domination.

In addition, the administration looked upon Europe as politically and economically important to the United States. The nation could not be secure if a hostile power dominated Europe. Moreover, the United States could not prosper if political or

economic conditions in Europe prevented Americans from obtaining materials, investing capital, or selling products in Europe and in areas linked with it. As the Undersecretary of State, Dean Acheson, explained, the United States had become "more dependent upon exports than before the war to maintain levels of business activity to which our economy has become accustomed."



*Three Architects of Containment: Acheson, Marshall, and Truman (Courtesy, Harry S. Truman Library)*

American leaders also assumed that economic conditions exerted a powerful influence on politics. "The seeds of totalitarian regimes are nurtured in misery and want," Truman maintained, and his new Secretary of State, General George C. Marshall, a stern, professional soldier, argued that the purpose of American policy "should be the revival of a working economy in the world so as to permit the emergence of political and social conditions in which free institutions can exist." If Europe remained depressed, Communism would triumph; if Europe became prosperous, Communism would be defeated.

Furthermore, administration leaders believed that the United States had the capacity and responsibility to tackle problems such as those that were developing on the other side of the Atlantic. Southern and Western Europe could recover and thus remain free from Communist control, Washington assumed, only if the United States helped. Europe could benefit from help, but only the United States had the economic power needed for the task. "We are the only country able to help," Truman insisted.

The old concept of the "American mission" reinforced the "lessons of history" to produce this sense of responsibility. In explaining the administration's position, Truman spoke in the language of that mission. He interpreted world politics as dominated by a struggle between alternative ways of life:

One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedoms.

The United States, then, had a mission to guarantee that the first way of life survived. (The theory obscured the fact that in at least one country that the administration felt compelled to aid, Greece, such a way of life had *not* been established.)

Interpreting events as it did, the Truman administration developed, in 1947-1948, the containment policy, with the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan as its major features in those years. In March 1947, Truman proposed that the United States should "support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures" and that \$400 million should be sent to Greece and Turkey. And in June, Secretary Marshall, the architect of the Western invasion of Nazi-controlled Western Europe, called upon Europeans to get together and "draw up a program designed to place Europe on its feet economically." He suggested that the United States should supply "friendly aid in drafting of a European program and later support of such a program so far as it may be practical for us to do so."

The President and his top foreign policy adviser were proposing that their nation play a crucial role in world affairs. While there were differences between the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, there were similarities that were more funda-

mental. The doctrine would promote military development and military action and had global implications, while the plan was directed at economic development and was limited to Europe. Both, however, sought to contain Communism using American economic power. The atomic bomb was another element in containment policy, but its role was not explicitly defined. Containment was unilateral in character, for, although the United States did call upon the Europeans to develop a plan, the United States acted largely on its own and made no effort to work through the United Nations. The policy was ambitious, though less so than Lend-Lease had been. It called for the expenditure of only about 25 percent as much as the wartime program had consumed. And despite Truman's expansive rhetoric to the contrary, its focus was limited to Southern and Western Europe; it did not extend to Asia or Eastern Europe, at least after Russia refused to cooperate. Although the proposals were designed to check Russia and Communism, containment was seen as the first step to "liberation." According to George Kennan, one of the policy's chief architects, containment would allow time for the United States and capitalism to demonstrate their fundamental superiority; liberation of Russia and Eastern Europe would follow. The realities of the situation seemed to dictate a focus on containment now, but it seemed capable of promoting the spread of Western ideals beyond the West later on.

One of the striking aspects of the containment policy was its political success in the United States during 1947-1948. The Truman administration persuaded Congress to appropriate funds for operations in Greece and Turkey in May 1947, and for the European recovery in March 1948. These appropriations were granted despite Republican control of the Congress and the proximity of national elections. Some critics objected to the small role played by the UN, the support of "reactionary" regimes in Greece and Turkey, and aid to "socialist" regimes elsewhere. Some, including the widely syndicated columnist Walter Lippmann, criticized the global implications, suggesting that the United States should not expend its "energies and . . . substance upon . . . dubious and unnatural allies on the perimeter of the Soviet Union" and that it could lead to unending intervention, including military intervention if economic aid failed to accomplish its objective. Republican Senator Kenneth Wherry of Nebraska warned against spreading "ourselves so thin across the world . . . that we would become

vulnerable on every front" and "set up conditions where Pearl Harbors . . . could be repeated simultaneously in a score of places."

Henry Wallace, clinging to hopes for cooperation with Russia and reliance upon the United Nations, provided especially vigorous criticism. He attacked the "Truman-led, Wall Street-dominated, military-backed group that is blackening the name of American democracy all over the world" and supporting "kings, fascists, and reactionaries." He charged that the Marshall Plan was "a plan to interfere in the social, economic, and political affairs of countries receiving aid." Moreover, the administration was willing to help only those countries that would accept "our kind of government" and subordinate their economy to the American economy. Labelling the plan the "Martial Plan," he argued that it would lead to war and maintained that aid should be handled by the UN.

Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio, the Republican leader in the Republican-controlled Senate, was another strong critic. Expressing the Republican position favoring cutbacks in government spending, Taft argued that the administration's proposals were too costly and were likely to wreck the American economy. "We cannot afford to go on lending money on a global scale," he insisted; other Republicans worried about "endless drains on American resources and raw materials," warning that "a bankrupt and demoralized America can make no contribution to the suffering people of the world."

Several factors enabled the administration to triumph over such opposition. In particular, the administration used dramatic rhetoric to underscore the dangerous international situation and the seriousness of Europe's plight, the ability of the United States to supply the required amount of aid, and the economic and political benefits the nation would derive from it. George Kennan was one spokesman for the administration. Then heading the State Department's Policy Planning Staff, Kennan had previously served in the Foreign Service, and had spent a great deal of time in Russia. Although he was fearful of Russia, he was also critical of the traditional American approach to world affairs, which he regarded as moralistic and legalistic. Developing a theory for containment, he emphasized the need "to confront the Russians with unalterable counterforce at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world." This provided American leaders with a rationale for their policies.



Truman and his aides did not work alone. They carefully cultivated congressional leaders and gained the cooperation of some of the leading Republicans in Congress. Senator Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, a recent convert from isolationism and chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, played an especially important role in building support for the proposals. In the House, two Republicans, Charles Eaton of New Jersey and Christian Herter of Massachusetts, made major contributions. And outside Congress, several Republican leaders, including Herbert Hoover, John Foster Dulles, and Thomas Dewey, many business leaders and the major farm and labor organizations helped to further the cause.

The Russians were also useful to the Truman administration. First, they refused to work with the other European nations in an attempt to jointly solve their problems. Fearing that the Marshall Plan would enable the United States to interfere in the internal affairs of European countries, gain control of their economies, and restore Germany as a strong, dangerous power, Russia withdrew from the efforts and forced the Eastern Europeans to do likewise. Had Russia been included in the plan, Truman would surely have encountered greater difficulties in persuading Congress to finance it.

In addition, Communists, with assurances of support from the Soviet Union, seized complete control of Czechoslovakia in February 1948. Such a dramatic illustration of the tightening process going on in the Russian sphere in 1947-1948 put Wallace in a particularly difficult position, for he claimed that liberals and Communists could work together. In Czechoslovakia, at least, it seemed that they could not.

Consequences flowed immediately from the new American policy. It strengthened anti-Communist groups in Southern and Western Europe and stimulated progress toward the establishment of a West German Republic. In turn, the Russians exerted greater control of Eastern Europe, a process that prompted Yugoslavia to rebel and establish itself as an independent Communist country in 1948. Progress toward the establishment of a West German Republic persuaded the Russians to impose a blockade on land and water traffic into Berlin, a city jointly controlled by Russia, the United States, Great Britain, and France. The United States responded to the blockade by airlifting supplies into the western sectors of Berlin; it resumed drafting men into the armed forces, enlarged the air force, and stationed two groups of

long-range bombers in England and Germany. Alarmed by this series of events, Western leaders began to build a defense alliance.

The cold war, quite obviously, was escalating rapidly in 1947-1948, as a result of American and Russian interactions. The process began with the possibility of further advances by the Communists; that possibility encouraged an American reaction that in turn produced a Russian reaction, and the latter resulted in new American moves. And so the cold war spiraled upward. If the United States and Russia had not been so powerful, they would not have been able to behave as they did. But their actions only made them more powerful: Eastern Europe became more closely tied to Russia, and the United States was more closely linked to Western and Southern Europe.

By late 1948, the United States was a major factor in European life. America's role in the world was even larger than had been anticipated a few years earlier. The Roosevelt administration, to be sure, had rejected isolationism and the Truman administration built upon that rejection. Truman completed Roosevelt's plans for the establishment of an American participation in an international organization. Roosevelt, however, had hoped that America's postwar role would be largely limited to participation in the United Nations and to the worldwide operations of American businessmen. He had not envisioned a broad program of economic assistance to other countries.

But by 1948, the United States was not only a member of an international organization, it also provided large-scale economic aid. In fact, reliance upon the economic power of the United States was more important than the American role in the UN. Moreover, that economic power was supplemented by a unique military power—the atomic bomb (and the B-29, a long-range bomber capable of delivering that weapon of mass destruction to remote targets).

To administration leaders, the development of a powerful role for the United States in world affairs was quite satisfying. They were convinced that history "dictated" that they must behave as they were. They believed they had learned the "lessons" of history and were avoiding the mistakes of the past. Russian leaders had similar convictions.

## Chapter 2

# Avoiding Depression and Maintaining Control

It was in the realm of foreign affairs that the Truman administration scored its major victories. Yet, it did achieve some success at home as well. Truman and his aides avoided a postwar depression and extended Democratic control of the federal government beyond 1948. Truman also tried to be an innovator in some areas, particularly civil rights, but desires to protect established institutions rather than the hopes for change dominated the politics of the period.

Many Americans anticipated a postwar depression. They argued that the war, not the New Deal or private enterprise, had brought the Great Depression to an end. By cutting back massive government spending and reducing the size of foreign markets, the ending of the war, they feared, would create conditions similar to those of the 1930s.

Once the fighting stopped, government spending was cut sharply. Defense spending dropped from nearly \$76 billion in 1945 to less than \$20 billion in 1946, and 9 million men were discharged from the armed forces from June 1945 to June 1946. Defense spending dropped even lower in 1947 and remained low for the rest of the decade.

Attempts by the administration to establish a sound domestic economic program were severely hampered. In an effort to obtain broad support, Truman staffed his cabinet with both conservatives and liberals. Although two New Dealers from the Roosevelt

period, Harold Ickes and Henry Wallace, were replaced in 1946, other liberals, such as Clark Clifford, were active and influential members of the administration. They, however, had to compete for influence with conservatives, such as John Snyder, an old friend of the President and a former banker who became Secretary of the Treasury in 1946. The situation inside the administration reflected both the complexity of the Democratic party and the personality of the President. Truman was committed to people not doctrines. In 1944, he had been chosen as Roosevelt's running mate by the Democrats because he seemed capable of working with and drawing together representatives of the different factions in the party. He tried to do that now, but he found that he provided the representatives of the factions opportunities to clash as well as to cooperate.

Clashes with Congress over economic policies were even more significant. Less than a month after the surrender of Japan, Truman delivered a major speech outlining his domestic policy. In effect, he called for a revival of the New Deal: continuation and building upon the liberalism of his predecessor so that a period of reaction, like the one that followed World War I, could be avoided. In the next year, however, he failed to persuade Congress to go along with most of his proposals. Congress abolished the Fair Employment Practices Committee, a wartime agency designed to enlarge job opportunities for blacks and other minorities, refused to establish a comprehensive housing program, and defeated a price control bill. At the time, Truman's only major domestic achievement was the Employment Act of 1946. The act, which was a response to the fears of a postwar depression, was a clarification of the government's responsibility for high employment and an attempt to strengthen the government's ability to reach that goal. It also established the Council of Economic Advisers to assist the president.

In November 1946, the Republicans gained control of Congress for the first time since the early days of Hoover's presidency. The electorate was influenced by the bitter struggles over prices and wages in the reconversion period and by dissatisfaction with Truman's performance, an attitude summed up in the quip, "To err is Truman." Dominated by desires to reduce the size and cost of the federal government and the power of organized labor, the Eightieth Congress opposed welfare programs and price control legislation, and cut appropriations

for agriculture and reclamation. But its most significant piece of domestic legislation was the Taft-Hartley Act, a law that reflected a widespread belief that labor had become too powerful. The measure imposed new restrictions on the labor movement, and was passed over Truman's veto. The President labelled Taft-Hartley "a clear threat to the successful working of our democratic society," but Taft insisted that the new law only sought "to restore equality to collective bargaining."

Despite sharp cuts in spending and difficulties in shaping an economic policy, the postwar depression did not occur, and the administration, and the federal government as a whole, deserved some credit for the performance of the business cycle. Had Washington blundered seriously in the handling of economic affairs, the economy would surely have gone into a tailspin—for the federal government had become a major part of the economic system. In addition, federal spending remained well above prewar levels. Government-administered programs established during the Roosevelt years, especially Social Security and the G. I. Bill of Rights, gave money to the unemployed and kept many people out of the job market. Furthermore, a tax cut went into effect immediately after the war. And through overseas relief, loans, aid, and diplomacy, the government maintained foreign sales at a high level and helped American firms gain access to raw materials abroad, especially oil.

Private forces also contributed to the level of prosperity enjoyed in the second half of the 1940s. Most firms involved in the war industry, such as automobile manufacturers, easily made the transition to activities in which they had been involved before the war. Moreover, wartime profits had supplied funds that could now be invested in plants and equipment, and business investments expanded rapidly in the late 1940s. A market was ready and waiting. Americans had been forced to postpone purchases of homes, automobiles, appliances, and other commodities during the war. Many people, in fact, had been unable to make purchases during the 1930s. During the war, however, they enjoyed incomes that enabled them to save, and now people eagerly bought the products of American industry.

Although not entirely free from economic problems, the postwar years were quite prosperous. The economy did suffer during the first year. There were many strikes, a limited supply of consumer goods, and an increase in unemployment and infla-

tion. But the nation avoided large-scale unemployment, and after a brief transition period, the economy began to grow, and continued to do so until 1949.

Despite the economic prosperity, Truman suffered many political setbacks. He faced a stronger Republican party, at the same time that his own party seemed to be disintegrating. The more leftist members, unhappy with Truman's foreign policy, abandoned him and joined forces with Henry Wallace. Like Wallace, they believed that Americans and Russians, liberals and Communists, could work together. Late in 1947, Wallace, concluding that he had widespread Democratic support but would be denied the presidential nomination, announced that he would run on a third-party ticket. During 1948, as the candidate of a new Progressive party, he waged an unusually strenuous and hard-hitting campaign that focused not only on foreign policy but also on domestic policy. He emphasized several themes. First, containment—a creature of Wall Street and the military—was imperialistic and was leading to atomic war. Second, reform at home depended on peace in the world. Third, a return to reliance on Roosevelt's United Nations would permit a revival of Roosevelt's New Deal. Finally, the groups opposed to reform—big business and the “big brass”—also promoted international conflict, and their power had to be destroyed so that policies could be changed.

In addition to alienating many liberals, the President was also facing strong opposition from Southerners, who were determined to maintain the status quo in race relations. After the Civil War and well into the twentieth century, a new racial system, often called “Jim Crow,” had taken shape. Although World War II challenged discrimination and created new job opportunities for blacks and Supreme Court action during the war destroyed the white primary, Jim Crow was still alive and governing the lives of most blacks. Throughout the country, segregation in the schools was common, and it was required by law in seventeen Southern and Border states and in the District of Columbia. Segregation in trains, buses, and public facilities was also widespread and dictated by law in many places. Signs and verbal commands required blacks to sit only in certain places on trains and buses, to stay out of particular eating places and recreational spots, to use specified rest rooms and drinking

fountains, and so on. In virtually every aspect of Southern life contact between whites and blacks was restricted. And even though the white primary had been invalidated, in the South blacks faced so many other obstacles in order to vote that only a small percentage ever made it into the polling booth. Moreover, in many communities throughout the nation, public housing projects were segregated, and provisions in real estate contracts prevented blacks from buying homes in many neighborhoods. The racial system was sustained by laws as well as by custom, and it was often reinforced by physical violence and economic pressure.

Several factors influenced Truman's efforts to change race relations. Truman brought to the White House his belief in the need to improve race relations. During his years of involvement in Kansas City and Missouri, blacks had been active participants in politics. He had been educated to their problems, needs, and desires and was receptive to their demands for change. An upsurge in Southern white violence against blacks also affected his thinking. As the leader of an administration that was devoting much of its time to foreign affairs, he became aware of the international implications of American race relations and concluded that the country could "no longer afford the luxury of a leisurely attack upon prejudice and discrimination." As he would explain in a veto message in 1951: "We have assumed a role of world leadership in seeking to unite people of great cultural and racial diversity. . . . We should not impair our moral position by enacting a law that requires a discrimination based on race."

The importance of the black vote was also a motivating force, helping Truman become a more active advocate of racial change than any of his predecessors had been. The 1946 congressional elections indicated that Northern and Western blacks, groups that were increasing in number as a consequence of migration from the South, were moving to the Republican party. In part, the change in party affiliation was due to Truman's failure to persuade Congress to pass civil rights legislation. To stem that tide, following the election, Truman established a Committee on Civil Rights to investigate race relations and recommend government action to protect civil rights. As the 1948 election approached, his top political adviser, Clark Clifford, a sophisticated young lawyer from St. Louis, advised Truman to act on civil rights in a manner that did not involve

risk. Clifford reasoned that black voters held the balance of power in several key states, and no policies "initiated by the Truman Administration no matter how 'liberal' could so alienate the South in the next year that it would revolt."

During the Truman years, pressure for change in race relations did not come solely or even chiefly from the White House. Demands were rising in black America, and the leading proponent for such change was the generation-old National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Although biracial, the organization was no longer dominated by whites and had become a black-controlled group. It also developed some working-class support, although it remained predominantly middle class. Still rejecting accommodation and conciliation, as it had when W. E. B. DuBois battled against Booker T. Washington early in the century, it reflected the growing determination to protest against the low status of black Americans. Mob violence, segregation, and disenfranchisement, not economic problems, provided the NAACP with its chief targets.

This civil rights pressure group relied chiefly upon legal action to bring about the changes it desired. Fearing violence, the NAACP counselled blacks to use their votes and the judicial system rather than mass action in the streets. The organization moved into the political arena on occasion to battle for laws against lynching, discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and the poll tax. Most often, however, battles took place in the judicial arena and were designed to persuade judges to enforce the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution. According to the promise of the Fourteenth Amendment, passed in 1868:

No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

And two years later, the Fifteenth Amendment promised:

The rights of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.



After 1870, however, a series of laws and practices were developed that conflicted with these amendments, and the chief aim of the NAACP was to persuade the United States Supreme Court to declare the Jim Crow system unconstitutional.

By the Truman years, the organization was experienced in dealing with the judiciary, and it had achieved many successes. The first major victory had come as far back as 1915, when the Court had overturned an Oklahoma voting law designed to remove blacks from state politics. In the next thirty years, the NAACP battled against residential segregation, white primaries, poll taxes, segregated schools, and discrimination against blacks in the enforcement of criminal law; it lost only two of the more than twenty cases that it carried to the Supreme Court. The organization's more recent victories had come in 1944 and 1946, when the Supreme Court ruled that the white primary was unconstitutional, and that a Virginia law requiring the reseating of passengers on interstate buses entering the state in order to comply with local segregation laws violated the commerce clause.

The experience that the NAACP had acquired enabled it to function with a high degree of skill. In an attack upon restrictive covenants (those features of real estate contracts against sale to blacks and other groups), for example, it selected and planned its test cases carefully and encouraged the publication of articles in legal periodicals that could be used in its briefs. Thurgood Marshall provided leadership in the NAACP's legal battles. He was a graduate of Howard University's law school who had worked for the organization since 1933, had become head of its Legal Defense and Education Fund in 1940, and had, by 1945, participated in major civil rights cases for over a decade. For the next sixteen years, he would make the basic decisions for the fund, assist in the preparation and presentation of the civil rights cases, and argue many of them in court. In nearly every case, he would be on the winning side.

The NAACP, however, had more than just experience. It had increased its membership during the war from 50,000 members to 450,000. Furthermore, in the new climate in race relations, it had more friends to call upon for help. For example, several other organizations filed *amicus curiae* ("friends of the court") briefs in the restrictive covenant cases.

The NAACP was the major focal point of a growing movement. It was a pressure group designed chiefly to affect the behavior of the Supreme Court. It was not, however, the only advocate of change in race relations, nor was it the ultimate source of pressure. The group channelled the fundamental pressure that came from members of the black communities who were dissatisfied with their status and unwilling to tolerate it any longer.

Late in 1947, the Justice Department began to cooperate with the NAACP. It filed an *amicus curiae* brief on behalf of the NAACP in the restrictive covenant case—a step that had been proposed by Truman's Committee on Civil Rights. This landmark act was the beginning of the department's participation in the civil rights movement.

The Supreme Court during the Truman years was also highly receptive to the NAACP. It was composed of men who, appointed by Roosevelt and Truman, were highly critical of the tendency of the earlier Court to invalidate economic legislation and believed that they should be more concerned with noneconomic questions such as civil rights. They were not dominated by precedent and held that the law should reflect social and economic realities.

Thus, the justices were willing to consider evidence from the social sciences in deciding cases involving blacks. For some time, social scientists had been attacking the racist doctrines upon which Jim Crow was based and stressing the importance of environmental conditions on human behavior. They argued that segregating people created a feeling of inferiority and did serious psychological damage. They maintained that low standards of housing were the cause of crime, juvenile delinquency, and disease, and segregation was directly responsible for poor housing since it forced too many people to live in a small area and prevented those who could afford to from moving into better housing.

In the spring of 1948, the Court ruled on two major civil rights cases. In *Sipuel v. Board of Regents*, which dealt with higher education, it did not attack segregation but ruled that a state must provide legal education for blacks "as soon as it does for any other group." In *Shelley v. Kraemer*, which involved housing, it focused on restrictive covenants designed to exclude persons of some races from particular residential areas. In

a unanimous decision written by Chief Justice Fred Vinson, a Truman appointee, the Court ruled that judicial enforcement of such covenants was state action and thus violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Even before the Vinson decision was handed down, Truman, following Clifford's advice and the recommendations of the Civil Rights Committee's report attacking discrimination and segregation, delivered a special message on civil rights. In February 1948, he called for national action, including legislation, to provide federal protection against lynching, to protect the right to vote, to prohibit discrimination in interstate transportation facilities, and to establish a permanent Fair Employment Practices Committee.

Leaders in the South protested—even more vigorously than Clifford had anticipated. They charged that Truman's proposals "would destroy the last vestige of the rights of the sovereign states," and they began to organize in an effort to force party leaders to behave more conservatively. They felt Truman had betrayed them. They explained his betrayal as a consequence of a new interest in the black vote in the North, and they threatened to deprive him of the Southern votes that he needed. Hostility toward the civil rights proposals was widespread in the South, and Southerners seemed divided only on the question of the steps to be taken. While some insisted that the South continue to work within the Democratic party, others proposed bolting the party. The latter group hoped their threats would frighten other Democrats into inaction, encourage the adoption of a weak civil rights plank, and nominate an opponent of civil rights legislation.

The administration tried to head off any swelling of the Southern revolt. The advisers who were most concerned about the loss of black votes and about the Wallace threat urged new steps in civil rights. But for the moment, Truman followed the advice of those who worried about the South and counselled caution. The White House proposed a civil rights plank in the party platform that ignored the specific proposals that Truman had made in February. But anti-Wallace liberals at the convention, with the exuberant Hubert H. Humphrey of Minnesota as one of their leaders, battled successfully for a stronger plank making the president's stand in February the official party position. The liberals commended Truman's "courageous stand

on the issue of civil rights," and called upon lawmakers "to support our President" in guaranteeing a set of clearly defined civil rights.

Acceptance of the civil rights plank at the convention produced the Southern bolt that the administration had feared. Thirty-five delegates from Mississippi and Alabama withdrew from the convention, and, shortly thereafter, joined with other Southerners in a "conference" in Birmingham that nominated Governor J. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina for the presidency. They called themselves the States' Rights party; others labelled them "Dixiecrats." At the conference, they also adopted a "declaration of principles," expressing the Southern resentments and fears—including fear that the system of segregation would be destroyed. The States' Righters expected to obtain the South's 127 electoral votes, defeat Truman, restore Southern influence in the Democratic party, and use that influence to reduce the power of the central government. Above all, they wanted to maintain the "Southern way of life." Their campaign was a crusade against centralization, dominated by the race issue.

With his party disintegrating before his eyes and the Republicans showing new signs of strength, Truman seemed destined to lose. Before the Democratic convention, he was so unpopular that several groups of Democrats tried to substitute a military hero, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, for Truman as the party's candidate; he was saved largely by Eisenhower's refusal to run. By midsummer, public opinion polls also showed that the Republican candidate, Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York, would win the presidential contest.

But, to the embarrassment of the pollsters, Truman avoided defeat. His victory was largely a result of the basic Democratic strength that had developed during Roosevelt's time. And in his long and strenuous campaign, Truman, capitalizing on that strength, sought to persuade Democrats not to desert him. He focused attention on the Eightieth Congress and linked his Republican opponent, Dewey, with Republican congressional leadership, although Dewey's point of view was actually rather close to Truman's. The President portrayed himself as a crusader rallying the people to save the gains made under the New Deal. He pictured the GOP as dominated by big business—by the "gluttons of privilege"—and dangerous to New



*Truman on November 8, 1948: One of His Life's Great Moments (Courtesy, Harry S. Truman Library)*

Deal programs and to prosperity. To combat the Wallace threat, he argued that his foreign policy promoted peace, not war, that the Progressive party was dominated by Communists, and that liberals must unite behind him in order to be effective and "rout the forces of reaction once again." To contain Thurmond, Truman reminded Southerners that they needed the New Deal type of economic programs and that Republican rule would be dangerous to the South; he seldom discussed civil rights.

However, Truman did discuss civil rights in Harlem. Furthermore, just before the campaign began, he issued two executive orders calling for changes in race relations in the armed forces and in the federal government. The order concerning the armed forces was especially important in light of America's changing role in the world. In its report, the Civil Rights Committee had called for an end to military discrimination, and Truman, in his civil rights message, had promised to carry out that recommendation. The Southern revolt and opposition from the army encouraged delay, but black leaders demanded action

and issued their own threats. A. Philip Randolph announced that he would advise blacks not to cooperate with the draft if the army remained a segregated institution. The Republican platform criticized racial segregation in the armed forces, and the Democratic civil rights plank, which promised "equal treatment in the service and defense of our nation," added to the pressure. Faced with this situation, several of his liberal advisers suggested that the President would be wise to carry out that plank, lest he lose the black vote. As a result, Truman issued his executive order in July, calling for equality of treatment and opportunity in the armed forces and the establishment of a committee to help with the implementation of that order. When questioned on the purpose of the order, Truman simply stated that it was intended to end segregation. Shortly thereafter, Randolph dropped his threat of civil disobedience.

Truman, using his position as President, took other actions to insure his own victory. In May, he recognized the new state of Israel; in July, he called Congress into special session, thereby gaining an opportunity to embarrass the Republicans by demonstrating that they could not pass the liberal legislation promised by some of their party leaders. Throughout the campaign period, he clashed and negotiated with the Russians over Berlin. And underscoring all else was his successful promotion of containment in the year before the campaign. This success was challenged by Wallace but not by Dewey or Thurmond.

Truman waged a colorful campaign; Dewey, a dull one. The President traveled thousands of miles, most of them by train; he made hundreds of speeches, most of them brief and informal, often delivered from the back of the train. All were hard-hitting, earning Truman the sobriquet "give 'em hell Harry." He often introduced his wife and daughter and chatted informally with the people who clustered about his campaign train. His style illustrated his image of himself as a common man and his view of the president as the champion of the people. His chief opponent, on the other hand, confident of victory, traveled fewer miles, made fewer speeches, and employed his rich baritone voice in more lofty rhetoric. And as one Republican observed, he looked like "the little man on the wedding cake."

Despite the difficulties within the Democratic party, Truman maintained his hold upon the presidency, but only by a slender margin. He retained most, but not all, of the Democratic strongholds. He was slightly stronger in the Midwest and Far

West than Roosevelt had been in 1940 and 1944, but was somewhat weaker in the East, where Dewey and Wallace made inroads, and in the South, where Thurmond drew away some votes. All of Roosevelt's victories were by wider margins.

With Truman's victory, the Democrats retained control of the White House, but that victory was not a demonstration of great popular support for Truman himself. He received less than 50 percent of the popular vote, won by the narrowest margin since 1916, 4.5 percent, and drew a much smaller percentage of the voters to the polls than had voted in the presidential contests of the Roosevelt period. Fewer than 49 million people voted, only slightly more than half of the citizenry. Obviously, Truman and his rivals had limited appeal and failed to arouse strong public interest in the election.

Although the campaign was waged chiefly on domestic issues, the outcome was especially significant for foreign policy. The congressional elections that accompanied the presidential contest reestablished Democratic control of Congress. The two sets of Democratic victories appeared to strengthen the New Deal by providing evidence of popular support for established domestic programs. But, except among black voters, the outcome did not demonstrate great support for new proposals. The campaign, as a whole, however, strengthened containment since it was endorsed by three of the four presidential candidates—Dewey and Strom Thurmond as well as Truman. Wallace, the only one who challenged it, was destroyed politically, receiving less than 3 percent of the popular vote.

If Truman's victory was not as spectacular as the element of surprise made it seem, it did enable the Democrats to maintain control of the White House. He and his administration had also helped the nation avoid a postwar depression. The two accomplishments were intricately linked. If the country had been in the midst of a postwar depression, Truman would surely have lost the election. As it was, people had something to preserve, and Democratic campaigners could effectively argue that the Republicans had given the country a depression once, and might do so again. Only the blacks voted for change—in race relations. And even then, they expressed confidence in established political institutions and a willingness to "work within the system" in pursuit of integration and equal opportunity. The Wallace supporters voted for large-scale, across-the-board change, especially in foreign policy, and were overwhelmed. Most

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voters voted to protect their possessions against apparent threats to them. The Democrats perceived the Republicans as a threat; the Republicans and the Dixiecrats feared the Democrats; nearly everyone assumed that the Communists threatened the American way of life.



## Chapter 3

# The Development of Containment

In 1948, containment triumphed. It overcame Wallace's challenge, and, during Truman's second term, it developed in important ways. The policy was enlarged and militarized.

At the time the Marshall Plan and recovery programs were created, the United States had some military power, much more than it had before World War II. But by the late 1940s, manpower had been cut from more than 12 million, in 1945, to 1.5 million, and the army, especially, was much closer to its prewar size than to the wartime level. Military power was concentrated in the new weapons—atomic bombs and long-range bombers. And while it established tight civilian control over atomic energy, by the President and the newly created Atomic Energy Commission, the government continued to develop and test new bombs. Military spending was also severely limited. It dropped below \$15 billion per year, and the administration seemed determined to keep it there. To increase the efficiency of the armed forces, Congress, responding to administration pressure, passed the National Security Act of 1947, which unified the armed forces, although not effectively. However, the legislators turned down the administration's proposal, repeated frequently after the war, to increase manpower through a system of universal military training (UMT), which would require all able-bodied males to receive military training and then become members of a ready reserve. In pressing for UMT in 1948, Truman suggested

that its establishment would be "unmistakable evidence to all the world of our determination to back the will for peace with the strength for peace." UMT was particularly appealing to Truman; for he had served in World War I, had risen to the rank of colonel between the wars, and, while conducting a senatorial investigation of the economic side of the war effort, had developed a skepticism about the military establishment that remained with him.

Several influences shaped military policy. While traditional hostility to a military establishment and military service existed, budgetary considerations exerted even more influence. They affected the thinking of congressmen as well as the top people in the White House, the Bureau of the Budget, and the Council of Economic Advisers. After Louis Johnson replaced James Forrestal as Secretary of Defense in 1949, these considerations also dominated Defense Department thinking.

Budgetary considerations related to larger economic theories. The economizers assumed that the United States only had a small amount of money to devote to national purposes; they feared that if the national government tried to spend too much it would damage the American economy. It would, for example, stimulate inflation, a serious concern of the Truman administration from 1945 to 1949. The economizers regarded the American economy as a factor of fundamental importance, for the entire anti-Communist effort depended on it. Furthermore, most of the economizers assumed that European economic recovery was more important than the development of a large army. Since European recovery cost several billion dollars each year, these officials believed that less than \$15 billion were available for the development of American military power. The American economy could not support a higher level of military expenditures.

Truman shared the fears of large-scale government spending, but they posed intellectual difficulties for him. They encouraged him to pursue a military policy that was hard to reconcile with his conception of the great importance of military power. And they contained the risk that he would be forced to behave in the weak fashion that he deplored in prewar leaders.

Fortunately for Truman's peace of mind, the United States had atomic bombs and the long-range bombers needed to deliver

them to remote targets. Confidence in American air power influenced postwar military policy. Because the United States had a monopoly on the new weapons of mass destruction, many policymakers assumed the nation did not need a large army. Equipped with the latest technology, the new air force, established by the National Security Act as an independent branch of the armed forces rather than a part of the army, could guarantee that the Soviet armies would not move. The Russian leaders would not be foolish enough to advance those armies, for if they moved, American bombs would destroy Russian factories and cities. Thus, fear of American air power could hold the Russian armies in check, and the United States did not need to spend large sums on ground forces. Here was a way to gain security without great cost. As the army declined, the air force grew, although not as rapidly as its champions desired.

Thus, the United States had a rather small and simple military establishment backing the containment policy at the same time that it established a substantial economic program. Underlying this approach was an assumption that American power, while substantial, was not unlimited. The economy, while a major source of American strength, was also the chief limiting factor. It could support only so much activity in military and international affairs. The same assumption—the limits of American power—encouraged the administration to emphasize aid to Europe rather than to Asia, despite the global implications of the Truman Doctrine.

While the administration aided anti-Communist moves in Western and Southern Europe, China fell under Communist control. Following World War II, the Chinese civil war escalated, and Washington's concern mounted rapidly. The Chinese Communists moved quickly into areas vacated by the defeated Japanese armies in North China and Manchuria, threatening American hopes for the development of a China with which the United States could have good political and economic relations. The Chinese Communists threatened to close the China door, thus barring entry by American missionaries and businessmen. Moreover, Russian power appeared likely to be enhanced by a Communist victory.

Washington made several efforts to influence the Chinese situation. The United States participated in the disarming and

evacuation of the Japanese, transported, trained, and equipped Chiang's forces, and supplied additional funds and technical assistance to help his government solve its grave economic problems. Distressed by corruption and other defects in the Chiang government, including the great influence of the wealthy Chinese, the United States also pressed Chiang to make reforms in Chinese institutions so that he would gain popular support. In addition, Washington relied heavily on diplomatic channels, especially on George Marshall's mission to China in 1946. The general, assuming that Chiang could win in peaceful competition if he gained time and promoted reform, tried to halt the civil war and establish a coalition government. Diplomacy failed, however, for each side distrusted the other and was confident that it could win the civil war and gain complete control.

Although the administration made some attempts to shape the situation, it rejected larger, more substantial efforts. It did not supply Chiang with massive economic aid, like that given to Europe. He received about \$2 billion from 1945 to 1949, which was more than the Truman administration regarded as desirable but was sent as a result of Republican pressure. Truman assumed that American abilities to become influential in China were limited, and, since only a certain amount of money could be mobilized for the anti-Communist campaign, choices had to be made. Europe seemed more capable of using large-scale American aid effectively—it was an advanced industrial society while China was a backward and sharply divided country with poor leadership. Furthermore, Europe seemed more important than China. Russia, which had moved its troops out of Manchuria but not out of Eastern Europe, was more active in Europe, and Europe, with much greater productive capacity, occupied a higher position in the international power structure.

In addition, the administration did not seriously consider large-scale military intervention in the Chinese civil war. The United States did make a military effort there, but after 1946 when most American troops were removed, it was a small effort. Large-scale military intervention had neither significant political advocates nor popular support in the United States. Americans had traditionally opposed military engagements on the Asian mainland, and the current postwar military policy was also a restraining factor. As the Chinese civil war reached its crisis stage, the United States did not have a large army to send into

combat. Moreover, leaders in the Truman administration doubted that anything but a massive effort in China could succeed. They did not think in terms of a limited war for a limited objective, such as the preservation of Chiang's control over southern China.

Thus, although the United States made some effort to assure the defeat of the Chinese Communists, they gained control of all of mainland China. Dean Acheson, the new secretary of state, concluded that "the ominous result of the civil war in China was beyond the control of the government of the United States. . . . It was a product of internal Chinese forces, forces which this country tried to influence but could not." The Communist victory was not based on numerical superiority, for the Communists had fewer troops and less equipment at the beginning of the civil war. Nor did Russian aid explain the Communist victory, for the Russians supplied the Chinese Communists with even less aid than the United States gave to the Nationalists. The outcome was determined largely by the ineffectiveness of Chiang's regime and forces. Chiang failed to capture the support of the Chinese people, and his troops surrendered easily; they joined with the Communist forces and turned over their supply of arms. The skill of Mao and his lieutenants was also important, for they were more effective militarily and had greater mass appeal.

Mao's victory, which came in 1949, affected international relations as well as life in China. Chiang and many of his followers fled to the island of Formosa; Mao gained control of the mainland, which enabled him to substitute an effective dictatorship for an ineffective one and to begin the transformation of Chinese life. The outcome led to closer ties between China and Russia and greater conflict between China and the United States. The Communists harshly denounced the Americans for their intervention, and the United States refused to recognize the new regime or permit it to become a member of the UN.

The United States, however, maintained a presence in Asia. America had bases, military strength, and economic influence in the Philippine Islands, although the Philippines had been granted political independence in 1946. After the war the United States occupied South Korea, where it maintained political and economic influence even after its troops were withdrawn in 1949. The American presence in Asia was especially important in Japan. The United States monopolized the

Japanese occupation, refusing to allow any other nation to participate, and used its new power to reshape Japanese life: it destroyed the military power and the political role of the military chiefs, it exalted the Diet, and it promoted economic growth and other changes. At the same time, Americans in Japan, headed by General Douglas MacArthur, worked effectively against the Communist efforts to influence Japanese life. Although Japan had been the most powerful part of Asia, most Americans derived little comfort from their nation's accomplishments there; while developments in China gave them a sense of great frustration.

The United States was also active in other parts of the non-European world. In the Middle East, for example, it gave both encouragement and some support to the new state of Israel, and it enhanced its opportunities in the Arab-controlled oil fields. In the Rio Pact of 1947, the United States obligated itself to defend Latin America. It sent only small amounts of economic aid there, however, and what was sent strengthened the military in Latin American politics. In his January 1949 inaugural address, Truman proposed a small program of technical assistance to help the "underdeveloped" areas become more productive, and, in June 1950, the "Point Four" program, as it was called, went into operation. With an appropriation of \$27 million, it was a dwarf alongside the European Recovery Program.

The administration assumed that the United States could not do much outside of Europe. Despite the global implications of the Truman Doctrine, Washington believed in the limits of American power and in the importance of the American economy and economic power. The nation was not omnipotent. It could not, therefore, build a giant army at the same time that it developed a large program of economic aid, and it could not make large and costly efforts in China at the same time that it had costly obligations in Europe.

At the end of the 1940's and the beginning of the 1950s, however, developments outside the United States, and a new secretary of state, persuaded the administration to change its policies. Reliance on American economic power, supplemented by American air power, now seemed inadequate to some American leaders, particularly Secretary of State Acheson, who pressed for an expansion of military power. Fears of Russian armies were influential in part. Stimulated by the Czech coup and the Berlin blockade, these fears did not subside even after

the Russian blockade was lifted in May 1949. Hopes for economic growth still seemed to be threatened. Western European businessmen, it was believed, would not be enterprising if they thought that the Russian armies might roll into their countries and seize their properties. In other words, in the eyes of some, economic strength was not enough, for Russian armies as well as Communist parties threatened the West, and economic recovery itself depended upon the growth of a sense of security. To play their vitally needed economic roles, businessmen had to feel secure against those threats. The military factor, then, was important for both the economy and politics; economic strength was not the only form of power.

To Acheson and others, the United Nations seemed to be incapable of creating security or even giving the illusion of it. Big power conflict, involving frequent use of the veto power by the Russians in the Security Council, limited the UN's effectiveness. "The system is not working as effectively as we hoped because one of its members has attempted to prevent it from working," Acheson explained. "By obstructive tactics and the misuse of the veto, the Soviet Union has seriously interfered with the work of the Security Council in maintaining international peace and security." The secretary, it should be added, never had high hopes for the UN and always believed that the military must be an important factor in international affairs.

Acheson shared many of Truman's fundamental ideas and was a great admirer of the President, although they differed in many ways. A tall, dapper man with a waxed moustache, Acheson was the son of an Episcopal clergyman, a graduate of Groton, Yale, and Harvard, and a highly successful Washington lawyer. He served in the Roosevelt administration in several high positions, continued to serve as Undersecretary of State during the early years of the Truman administration, and, after a brief return to private practice, became Secretary of State in 1949. In addition to his strong convictions about the importance of military power, which were based on a distrust of human nature, he feared a repetition of the failure of the interwar period, he believed in containment, and he considered Europe to be more important than Asia. While much more skeptical of public opinion than Truman was, the secretary admired the President's ability to make decisions.

With Acheson playing a leading role and Truman backing

him firmly, the renewed emphasis on military power produced, as its first result, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), a Western defense alliance consisting of the United States, Britain, France, the Benelux nations, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, Portugal, Norway, and Canada. The members promised to cooperate militarily if Russia moved against one of them, and they assumed that this cooperation would maximize their strength. It was only a limited arrangement. It did not include the West German Republic, which was established in May 1949, or Greece and Turkey, and it did not involve a military buildup. Primarily, it meant that the United States would use its atomic power to defend the West. American atomic power, then, became more clearly involved in containment. The planners assumed that NATO would exert a restraining influence on the Russians, thus keeping the peace, and the establishment of the new organization constituted a new stage in containment strategy.

The acceptance of the treaty by a wide margin (82 to 13) in the Senate, in July 1949, demonstrated the strength of the containment policy. Wallace opposed the treaty as did Taft. Taft, along with other critics, argued that NATO was certain to reduce American freedom of action, would be very costly, and was likely to produce war with Russia, leading the United States into "other people's wars." Critics also protested that it would reduce the power of Congress to declare war. Some also saw the development of military power as a threat to free institutions, while others feared that the military approach to security would become dominant. The administration, however, helped once again by Senator Vandenberg, among others, triumphed over the opposition, even though the treaty marked a significant departure from the nation's traditional opposition to "entangling alliances" in peacetime. The treaty's champions insisted that NATO would persuade the Russians that military moves would be too risky; they saw the treaty as a means of avoiding war. Defenders of NATO also challenged the charge, made by Wallace and others, that NATO was inconsistent with the philosophy of the UN, and they insisted that the treaty recognized that Congress alone had the power to declare war. In each case of aggression, Congress would participate in the decision concerning the American response.

Further militarization of containment quickly followed the Russian development of the atomic bomb, which was tested by



the Russians in August 1949 and announced by Truman the following month. The development surprised the administration. Washington assumed that the Russians would eventually learn to build this weapon, for they had the required scientific, technical, and industrial systems. But American officials predicted that more time would be required. Now they concluded that the military situation was fundamentally altered. Russia's success challenged the basis of American military policy: its dependence on the American monopoly of atomic weapons. In September, Congress established, at the administration's request, a Military Assistance Program. The program was designed to use American economic power to promote the military development of the nation's allies and would supplement use of that power for economic purposes. Thus, it was linked to the European Recovery Program in political objective. The initial appropriation was well over \$1 billion. According to Acheson, the administration's policy was "to help free people maintain their integrity and independence . . . wherever the aid we are able to provide can be effective." In response also to the Russian atomic bomb and after a hot but secret debate raged within the government, Truman decided, early in 1950, to build an even more powerful weapon of mass destruction, a hydrogen bomb, thereby guaranteeing that the American air force would continue to be more powerful than its Russian counterpart.

In addition, the administration developed a plan—NSC-68—for a vast buildup of American forces. The plan called for a substantial increase in the defense budget, including a major expansion of the army. Championed by Acheson and widely endorsed inside the administration by late spring 1950, the plan was based on the assumption that Russia's capacity to expand had been increased significantly by the success of its atomic program and would become even greater if the United States and its allies did not develop more military power. Top men in the administration, and particularly Acheson, assumed that conventional military power had to be increased substantially in order to change Russian behavior in international affairs. Otherwise, after they had developed a large nuclear arsenal, the Russians would expand in a piecemeal fashion, confident that the United States would not retaliate with nuclear power for it would fear destruction of its own cities by Russian bombs.

The plan also assumed that the United States could afford to increase spending on its military forces. Along with the importance

of military power, economic theory had changed, as well. The champions of NSC-68 argued that considerations of national security had to become the dominant element in the national budget, and that the economy could support a much larger military establishment. Rather than 5 percent of the gross national product being spent on defense, the administration should spend 20 percent. The existing economy could support a military machine that cost \$40 to \$50 billion a year.

Thus, as the European Recovery Program began to function, the United States began to move toward heavier reliance on military power. The objective remained the same—containment and eventually liberation—but the means were being changed. Containment was being militarized.

By June 1950, however, Truman had not yet decided to press for a vast program of military spending and development of a complex military establishment, involving a large army and navy as well as a powerful air force. Restrained largely by political considerations, by his belief that the people and the Congress were not ready to endorse the spending envisioned in the plan, he did not decide to implement NSC-68. Favored by Acheson, it did not yet have the President's endorsement, at least not publicly, as summer began.

Although the administration was now paying more attention to military power, it still believed that Europe was more important than Asia. Washington held the view that China was dominated by Russia and was likely to "lend itself to the aims of Soviet Russian imperialism and attempt to engage in aggression against China's neighbors." Yet, in January 1950, the administration rejected a proposal to place an American fleet between mainland China and Chiang's stronghold on Formosa. Acheson suggested that the nation's role on the Asian mainland must be limited largely to nonmilitary help for nationalistic, effective, and popular governments. The administration was ready to do much more in Europe, for it assumed "that control of Europe by a single, aggressive, unfriendly power would constitute an intolerable threat to the national security of the United States."

Nevertheless, in the last week of June 1950, the administration clearly extended the containment policy to the Asian mainland and backed it up with military power. The United States intervened in a war in Korea, a peninsula reaching south from Manchuria toward Japan. Earlier, the administration

considered Korea relatively insignificant from a military point of view; it pulled American troops out of the peninsula, and declared it to be beyond the American defensive perimeter. While it provided some support for the new government of Syngman Rhee, the administration believed that South Korea should rely chiefly upon either its own efforts or on the UN for defense.

The Korean War resulted from the interaction of four nations: North Korea, South Korea, Russia, and the United States. The Korean peninsula had been divided by the United States and Russia for occupation purposes, and the division had been hardened by Russian and American efforts to shape the politics of their own zones. North Korea began the war in the hope of reunifying the peninsula and preventing South Korea from doing so. It was further motivated by the military weaknesses in the South. The Russians contributed to the outbreak of the war. They supplied arms to North Korea and trained the military forces. Significantly, they believed that the Korean situation provided an opportunity to strengthen themselves in Asia, for the United States seemed insufficiently interested in Korea to intervene militarily. Furthermore, the Russians were troubled by American plans for Japan. The frequently provocative acts of the South Koreans, who did hope to bring the entire peninsula under their control but were restrained by their weaknesses, were also important to the background of the war. The United States played its part as well. Its efforts in Korea were limited to providing economic aid to the South Koreans, not offensive weapons. Yet the United States seemed to be planning to turn Japan into a permanent American base.

The American decision to intervene in Korea was not dictated by a belief that South Korea was an area of great strategic or economic importance. Rather, the decision was based on the belief that North Korea was only a puppet of the Russians. The administration interpreted the North Korean invasion as a Soviet-backed move against the free world. The attack, Truman maintained, demonstrated that "communism has passed beyond the use of subversion to conquer independent nations and will now use armed invasion and war." This interpretation allowed Truman and his advisers to maintain that the situation in Korea was similar to occurrences in the 1930s, such as the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, rather than a civil war or an attack by

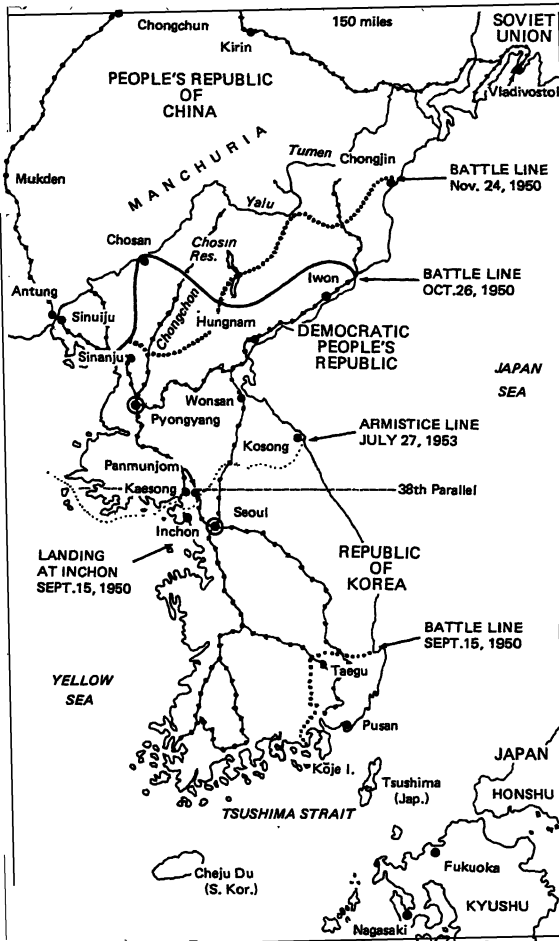
one small country on another. And they were determined to avoid the great American mistake of the 1930s: the refusal to get involved at an early stage in the development of aggression. If they intervened they would halt aggression, discourage Communist moves in other places, reassure America's allies about the reliability of the United States, and avoid a larger war.

The fact that postwar United States had not avoided the mistake of military weakness did not inhibit the administration. The President and others believed that success in Korea would not require much effort. Thus, although the United States was not well prepared for the kind of war that was raging in Korea, a ground war, Truman decided to intervene, first with air and sea power and later, as the South Korean army fell back before the forces of the north, with ground forces.

Truman's actions did not meet any real political opposition. With Russia boycotting the Security Council because the UN refused to admit mainland China to the organization, the administration obtained UN endorsement of American actions. For the moment, Americans, such as Senator Taft and General MacArthur, who criticized as weak and ineffective the administration's Asian policy, now supported American effort in Korea.

It was clear that containment had been militarized, and Truman's doubts about the wisdom of a military buildup and popular and congressional opposition quickly disappeared. Although Korea was not large, and Washington limited the war to the peninsula, the war became the biggest military effort that the United States had yet made in Asia. The war grew in a step-by-step fashion, with heavy losses inflicted on both sides. Soon after the fighting began, the United States began to expand its military power, along the lines laid out in NSC-68. Annual expenditures for defense were pushed above \$50 billion in 1952, and the armed forces were expanded beyond 3,000,000 men. Because the army dominated the war effort, it enjoyed the most substantial growth. Budgetary limitations and new weapons were no longer the basis for American military policy.

Beyond the substantial military activity in Korea, the war encouraged other developments, and Asia became more important to the administration. The United States sent large amounts of military equipment and economic aid to the French to help them squelch a revolution, led by Ho Chi Minh, in Indochina.



*The Korean War*

Seeing the French effort as an “integral part of the worldwide resistance of the Free Nations to Communist attempts at conquest and subversion” and convinced that “neither national independence nor democratic evolution can exist in any area dominated by Soviet imperialism,” the administration took over half of the French battle costs. Furthermore, Washington strengthened United States forces in the Philippines, increased military aid to the Philippine government, and formed an alliance with New Zealand and Australia.

Relations between the United States and China, moreover, deteriorated still further as a result of the war. The United States intervened once again in the Chinese civil war by placing a fleet between Formosa and the mainland, a step that had been rejected earlier in the year. In turn, when American forces approached the Chinese border, the Chinese intervened in the war in Korea. The administration continued to refuse to recognize the Chinese government and was able to keep it out of the UN.

In addition, the war accelerated the development of peace and security treaties with the Japanese. They freed Japan from American occupation in 1952 but enabled the United States to hold on to bases there.

Although the United States considered Japan to be strategically important, it still took second place to Europe. In fact, the decision to intervene in Korea was influenced by concern over Europe, paradoxical as that may seem. Trying to build a successful alliance with European nations, the administration feared that its allies would lose confidence in the United States if the Americans failed to come to the defense of South Korea, an area in which the United States had accepted responsibilities following the defeat of Japan. Confidence, the administration believed, was the basis of alliances. Furthermore, if the United States failed to act, Russia might conclude that the United States lacked strength and determination and that she could move military forces farther west in Europe.

At the same time that Americans fought in Korea, Washington stepped up its efforts to develop strength in Europe. The administration feared that Russia, or her allies, would seize territory there or in a region of great importance to Western Europe—the Middle East—if they were not restrained. Europe seemed to need protection, and therefore, in order to restrain Communist power in Europe, the West had to expand its ground forces. Thus, the United States pushed plans for a vast expansion of NATO forces and the rearmament of West Germany, enlarged the Military Assistance Program, sent additional American troops to Europe, and appointed General Eisenhower commander of NATO forces in Europe. The troops were sent in order to strengthen European confidence in the United States as well as Western defenses, and their presence symbolized the importance of Europe and of military power. By 1952, containment was almost completely dependent upon mili-

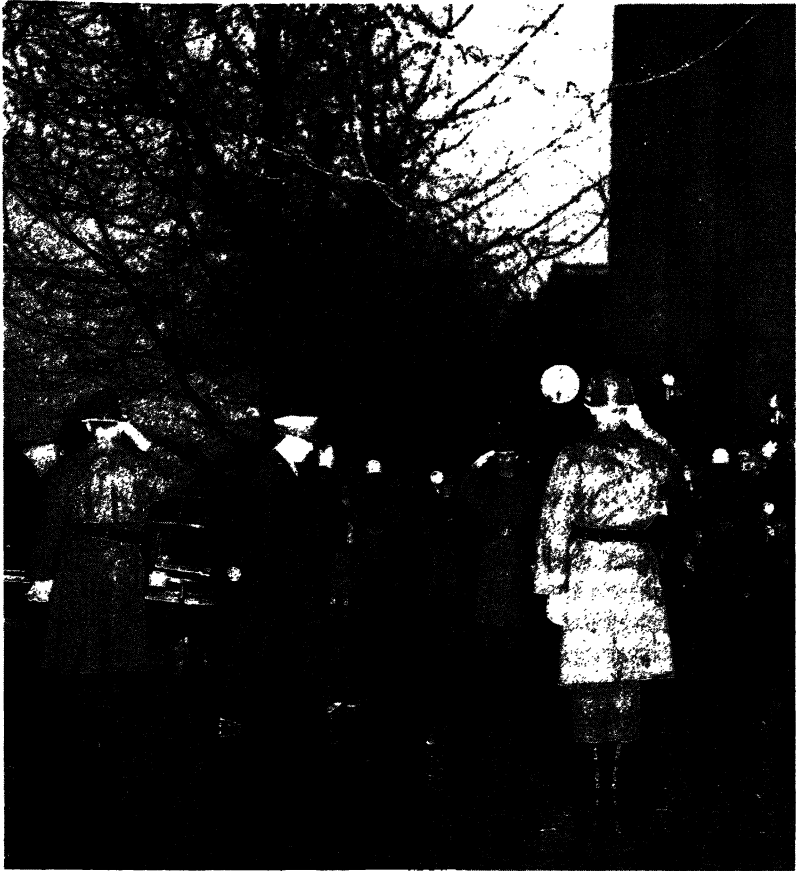
tary power, for the American-financed European Recovery Program was completed. Nearly all of the dollars that the American government was sending abroad were now earmarked for military development.

As the attention to Europe suggests, the administration saw Korea as part of a larger world picture and far from the most important part. This became clear when Truman rejected a proposal for a much larger effort in the Korea-China theater. That rejection led to another significant aspect of the war: one of the most important civil-military conflicts in American history.

This rejection took place after the failure of another experiment with liberation. American forces, led by General MacArthur, won a spectacular victory over North Korea in September 1950. Rather than stop after enemy forces had been driven out of the South, American leaders, Truman, Acheson, and Marshall, now secretary of defense, eager to take advantage of the opportunity to destroy the Communist regime in North Korea and unite the peninsula under a non-Communist government, sent their armies north. MacArthur advised that the Russians and the Chinese would not intervene or at least not effectively. But as the American forces moved toward the Chinese border, the Chinese, seeing the American drive as a threat to their security, moved their forces in and pushed the American and Korean troops back from China and out of North Korea before the end of the year.

MacArthur now proposed a much greater military effort. He advised the administration to throw more force against the Chinese in Korea and to carry the war into China itself, using American air and naval power and Chiang's troops. According to MacArthur, the United States should seek a decisive victory that would liberate North Korea, reunify the peninsula, cripple China, and prevent her from seizing other areas. He was confident that the United States could succeed in these efforts; he was also critical of the administration's appraisal of Asia. The United States should and could defend every place in the world that was threatened by Communism. "The Communist threat," he advised, "is a global one."

Truman and his advisers rejected MacArthur's suggestions. They seemed costly, unnecessary, and dangerous. If the plan failed, potential dangers included all-out war with China and Russia. The United States would feel compelled to expand its



*MacArthur: Removed from Command (UPI)*

effort, and Russia would conclude that she must come to the defense of China. "We are trying to prevent a world war—not to start one," Truman explained. Furthermore, MacArthur's proposals could tie the United States down in an area of secondary importance and provide the Soviets with new opportunities in Europe, giving Russia "the broad base upon which to build the military power to rule the world." Washington assumed that Russia was using China and North Korea for this purpose. MacArthur's strategy would, as Truman's top military adviser, General Omar Bradley, would later define it, "involve us in the wrong war, at the wrong place, at the wrong time, and with the wrong enemy."



Thus, rather than accept MacArthur's advice, Truman removed him from command in April 1951. This was done after the general, a proud man with a long and distinguished record as soldier and administrator who was critical of the leadership in Washington, tried to use his prestige to force a change in policy by appealing directly to the public and the Republicans in Congress for support for his ideas. Truman, a man with strong convictions about the President's prerogatives, saw the general as a threat to his authority as commander in chief as well as to his foreign policy. As Truman explained, he considered it "essential to relieve General MacArthur so that there would be no doubt or confusion as to the real purpose and aim of our policy."

The administration returned to the original goal of the war: containment. Washington now sought a negotiated settlement, limited American military operations to Korea, and employed no more force than seemed necessary to gain acceptable terms. Despite growing discontent over the war within the United States, discontent that grew as the fighting became stalemated in 1951 and efforts at negotiation failed to produce a settlement, the administration continued to pursue its goal, confident that the defense of South Korea had many desirable consequences.

The Korean War was a costly affair and remained so to the end of the Truman administration. Heavy fighting continued through 1951 and 1952, although little ground was gained or lost after the spring of 1951. Bloody battles still occurred in the late stages of the war. For example, the battle of "Heartbreak Ridge" lasted thirty-seven days, with each side trying to wear down the other and force acceptance of favorable terms. Before the war ended, more than 54,000 Americans lost their lives, compared with over 405,000 in World War II, over 364,000 in the Civil War (on the Union side) and over 116,000 in World War I. In dollars, the costs (not including veterans benefits and interest) were \$54 billion, as compared with \$288 billion for World War II and only \$26 billion for World War I.

One's evaluation of the war, whether it was a victory or a defeat, depended on one's definition of those terms. MacArthur and his admirers regarded it as a defeat because it did not free North Korea from Communist control and it did not seriously weaken China. The administration, however, saw it as a victory. It accomplished its goal of containment, avoided other undesirable development, such as Russian expansion in Europe or

World War III, and demonstrated American strength and determination. The war seemed to be "a severe setback" for "Communist imperialist aims in Asia." "The attack on Korea was part of a greater plan for conquering all of Asia," Truman insisted. "They want to control all of Asia from the Kremlin." Beyond that, he maintained, the enemy had "found out that aggression is not cheap or easy" and "men all over the world who want to remain free . . . know now that the champion of freedom can stand up and fight and that they will stand up and fight." The war did check a Communist effort at expansion by maintaining the independence of South Korea from Communist control. But there was no evidence to support Truman's perception of Russia's role, and the American effort did not persuade everyone that the United States could or should make a similar move when faced with similar situations in the future. In fact, many interpreted the great unpopularity of the war and of Truman during that period to mean that the United States would never make such an effort again.

To Truman, the significance of the war was even greater than the militarization and expansion of containment and the frustration of the North Koreans that it produced. To him, the American effort proved conclusively that he had learned the lessons of history and had avoided the mistakes of the past.

Containment had indeed been enlarged and militarized. And the administration now assumed that nearly every part of the world was important, to a varying degree, to the United States. According to Truman, "aggression anywhere in the world" was "a threat to peace everywhere in the world." The administration also assumed that the nation needed a large and complex military system in order to contain Communist efforts to expand throughout the world. The nation had to have the capability and the clearly communicated will to defend those less important areas. Otherwise, other nations would lack confidence in the United States, and Russia would tip the balance of power in her favor by seizing one country after another.

The nation had moved far from isolation. It also departed from the idea that it should play its role in the world largely inside an international organization. Instead, the United States was using its military and economic power to influence events in many parts of the world. The Truman administration had been a major promoter of change in American foreign policy, but it

had not established a new way of conducting international affairs. It had not destroyed power politics; rather it was participating strenuously in them. By the 1950s, the United States was not only a member of a worldwide organization, as Roosevelt had planned; it was also providing large-scale foreign aid, fighting in Asia, participating in military alliances, and deploying troops, planes, and ships far from the nation's borders. The Truman administration had not discarded the theory that there were limits to American power. That theory played a decisive role in the Truman-MacArthur controversy. The limits, however, had been expanded. To the administration and its supporters, there seemed to be no realistic alternative to power politics. The lessons of history seemed to dictate that the United States must behave as it was behaving.

## Chapter 4

### The Fair Deal and the Red Scare

As the Truman administration changed American foreign and military policies from 1949 to 1953, Truman battled for change at home. But his accomplishments were rather small. Although he battled for what he called the Fair Deal, little of it was translated into law. Before the end of his years as President, much of his time was spent defending himself and his administration against charges that they were not doing enough to safeguard the nation's institutions against domestic and foreign threats. The Fair Deal took second place to a Red Scare.

The Fair Deal was Truman's label for a series of domestic proposals made after his 1948 election victory. Based upon the New Deal and the assumption that the government is able to promote desirable social and economic developments, the Fair Deal was more than a continuation of the New Deal. It called for repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947, which labor found highly undesirable. The Fair Deal advocated greater benefits from and wider coverage by Social Security; a raise in the minimum wage; more public housing, slum clearance, public power and reclamation; federal aid to education, and national health insurance. Its farm proposals included the Brannan Plan, which was designed to pay greater attention to the interests of consumers and envisioned the establishment of a farmer-labor alliance. The Fair Deal also paid much more attention to civil rights than did the New Deal. Truman pressed for implementation of his execu-

utive orders of 1948, called once again for broad civil rights legislation, and attacked discriminatory employment practices.

Among Truman's accomplishments was enactment of the Housing Act of 1949, which provided for public housing and slum clearance. Despite heavy opposition from realtors and most conservative congressmen, although not Robert Taft, the measure was passed with bipartisan support. In addition, Congress went along with other presidential programs. It expanded public power, soil conservation, reclamation, and flood control; it increased the number of people covered and the benefits paid by Social Security; and it raised the minimum wage. However, Congress did not enact the Brannan Plan, federal aid to education, national health insurance, or the civil rights proposals; nor did it repeal the Taft-Hartley Act.

The administration was also influential in Supreme Court decisions concerning civil rights. Continuing to cooperate with the NAACP, the Justice Department submitted "friends of the court" briefs that helped persuade the Court to hand down decisions in 1950 attacking segregation in interstate commerce and higher education. In the spring of 1950, the Court, in *Henderson v. United States*, decided unanimously that Southern railroads could not confine black passengers in dining cars to one table separated from others by curtains or partitions. It declared that this violated the commerce clause. Two other unanimous rulings handed down at the same time attacked segregation in higher education. In *McLaurin v. Oklahoma State Regents*, Vinson, speaking for the Court, declared that the equal protection guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment was denied blacks in a state university when they were segregated within classrooms, libraries, and cafeterias. And in *Sweatt v. Painter*, the Court, again with Vinson as its spokesman, came close to ruling that separate educational facilities could never be equal. The Court denied the NAACP's efforts, supported by several prominent educators as well as the Justice Department, to overturn *Plessy v. Ferguson*, a case, in 1896, in which the Court ruled that, as long as the facilities were equal, segregation did not constitute discrimination or deprive blacks of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. But the Chief Justice did state that a black was denied equal protection of the laws when he was excluded from the University of Texas Law School, even though the state provided a separate law school for blacks, for the latter was an inferior institution.

In 1953, the Court moved even closer to destroying the Plessy rule, and attention now focused on segregation in elementary schools, a practice required by law in seventeen states. In preparation for the case, Thurgood Marshall decided that the NAACP must go beyond criticizing the inferiority of all-black schools; it must attack the "separate-but-equal" doctrine. In support of the NAACP, Truman's Justice Department, in one of its last acts, filed a brief advising the Court to overrule the doctrine. Faced with the argument that separate educational institutions could never be equal, the Court returned the case, *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, for reargument, seeking answers to several questions. Among other matters, the justices asked if the Fourteenth Amendment gave Congress or the judiciary the power to interfere with segregation.

The Court's high degree of unity in civil rights cases was both surprising and significant. It was surprising because the justices were sharply divided in other areas. Prior to 1935, the Court seldom decided less than 85 percent of its cases unanimously, but in 1952, only 10 percent found all members in agreement. The justices approached the difficult question of race relations in a cautious, gradual way. Real efforts were made to reach agreement among all members so as to place the Court in the strongest possible position to face hostile reactions.

Truman's role in the desegregation of the armed forces was much more direct than his role in the judicial attacks on discrimination and segregation, for he was the commander in chief. In 1949, however, he learned that an order from the commander in chief was not enough to desegregate the armed forces. His instructions to integrate met with some success in the navy and air force. But the army offered strong resistance, arguing that it must conform to the customs of the larger society in order to be effective and that blacks were not suited for combat. This resistance forced the committee that had been established to help with the implementation of the order and the President to apply pressure on the army to persuade it to adopt integration as a policy, but even that pressure was not enough to end the practice of segregation.

The Korean War supplied the force needed to produce the change in practice. The war compelled the army to send blacks into combat alongside whites in order to replace other whites who had been killed or wounded. And integration worked. Whites and blacks in combat units got along with one another,

and the blacks fought more successfully than they had in segregated units. The experience changed the ideas of army officers and Southern congressmen, including Senator Richard Russell and Congressman Carl Vison of Georgia, the chairmen of the congressional committees most concerned with the armed forces.

Several factors prevented Truman from accomplishing more on behalf of civil rights and other features of the Fair Deal. His own shortcomings as a reformer were among them. He was not as interested in domestic matters as he was in foreign affairs, for problems in the latter area seemed more serious and pressing, and he was not as articulate and skillful as F.D.R. had been at selling his programs. Perhaps also, he made too many proposals at a time and did not give some of them as much support as they needed. Moreover, he relied heavily on his conservative advisers and administrators who resisted his reform proposals. Conservatives such as John Snyder, who served as secretary of the treasury until the end of the administration, and Charles Sawyer, the secretary of commerce from 1948 to 1953, used their influence in the administration to resist liberal tendencies.

Truman also faced conditions that posed major difficulties for a reformer. While depression generated public support for innovation during Roosevelt's early years, Truman functioned in a relatively prosperous period. There was a recession in 1949, but it was not a depression, and just as it ended, the Korean War hit the economy and produced a boom. In this economic situation, Truman did not benefit, as Roosevelt had in the 1930s, from a widespread demand for a broad program of reform. Moreover, Truman faced a powerful conservative coalition that had already demonstrated in its earlier days that it could frustrate a President, even one as skillful as F.D.R. The coalition of conservative Democrats, mostly Southerners, and conservative Republicans had not been destroyed by the 1948 election. Although the election enlarged the liberal bloc, the conservatives (with conservative Democrats more important and conservative Republicans less so than they had been in 1947-1948) continued to demonstrate great strength on domestic issues.

Truman's position on race relations further aggravated the normal conflict with Congress. Effectively using the filibuster, Southern senators held up all kinds of legislation that Truman and other civil rights advocates were interested in. Because of

that interest, the reformers could tolerate inaction by the Senate for only so long. From time to time, they felt compelled to give up their efforts on behalf of civil rights in order to move forward in other areas.

Powerful pressure groups added to Truman's troubles. He had support from groups like the NAACP and the CIO, but he faced powerful opposition from business groups, many of whom disliked, for obvious reasons, such proposals as repeal of Taft-Hartley. The American Medical Association (AMA), battled against his health insurance proposal, which offered a new method of paying medical bills. The American Farm Bureau Federation threw its weight against the Brannan Plan, which sought to guarantee both high income for farmers and abundant supplies of farm commodities at reasonable prices for consumers. This was to be accomplished in part through payments to farmers from the government, rather than by maintaining price supports for certain commodities, and the plan would also limit the amount of annual income the government would support to \$26,000. That is, farmers who received more than that amount through sales in the marketplace would not receive payments from the government. The AMA and the Farm Bureau saw similar dangers in the two proposals. They would, it seemed, make doctors and farmers dependent on the federal government, rather than the market, for their income. Inevitably, these groups reasoned, the government would control the lives of doctors and farmers and would limit their incomes. Thus, the organizations denounced the Fair Deal as "socialistic."

Religious divisions also hampered reform. Protestants battled against Catholics over federal aid to education, with the argument centering on aid to parochial schools. To Catholics, it seemed only fair that their schools would receive such aid for Catholics paid taxes, but Protestants often warned that government support for parochial schools would be a dangerous violation of the principle of separation of church and state—a principle that had been important in America since the days of Roger Williams.

Similarly, the Korean War, which began early in the Fair Deal's second year, was a giant obstacle to reform. It distracted the President and the Congress, encouraging them to think that nothing was more deserving of their time and energy than the war. One Fair Deal measure after another was pushed aside.



The administration, for example, dropped its campaign to build support for the Brannan Plan, a campaign that had been going on for a year. Congress, rather than devote time for reform, concentrated on such matters as defense and economic controls to halt war-induced inflation. And the war increased the power of Southern Democrats, who were resistant to reform, such as Senator Russell, Senator Walter George of Georgia, and Senator Tom Connally of Texas, men who occupied major positions in the congressional committees concerned with military and foreign affairs. A political scientist who served on the White House staff during this period has written that "there was no time . . . when Truman's Administration . . . could afford to trade a major objective in the foreign field for some advantage in the domestic. Consistently it was, and had to be, the other way around." Furthermore, the Korean War, which was far from popular, helped the Republicans strengthen themselves in the congressional elections of November 1950. After that, the President relaxed his pressure for the Fair Deal even more and devoted himself increasingly to foreign and military policies and related questions of mobilization and inflation.

Domestically, Truman was experiencing frequent defeats during this period. A major loss involved a decision by the Supreme Court, filled with Roosevelt and Truman appointees, that his seizure of the steel mills was unconstitutional. Early in 1952, a threatened steel strike seemed likely to disrupt production of an essential commodity needed in Korea as well as in other places. But in 1947 Congress provided the President with a weapon that could be used in such situations—the injunction provision of the Taft-Hartley Act. But Truman disliked it, regarding the provision as unfair to labor and ineffective. Encouraged by two decades of expanding presidential power and convinced that a strong President was the key to successful government, and that he had to maintain both the flow of supplies to his troops and the health of the economy, he chose to seize the mills in order to keep them functioning. He justified his move with a claim that he had "inherent power" in national emergencies to take such action. The steel companies, supported by a public that had lost confidence in the President, challenged him in the courts. The Supreme Court, rather than backing off, moved quickly and surprised Truman and most observers by invalidating his action. The Court ruled that Truman must act as

Congress had prescribed or not at all, thereby reaffirming the proposition that the President is not above the law. Truman, in turn, accepted the Court's decision and returned the mills to their owners; the workers went out on strike; the President declined once again to use Taft-Hartley; Congress did not give him the authority he requested to seize the mills a second time and did not direct him to use the injunction; and the strike closed the industry for fifty-three days, although no steel shortage occurred.

The escalating Red Scare was another obstacle to the Fair Deal's success. American fears of Communism did not begin at the water's edge. Many Americans believed that Communism was an internal menace, and fears of Communists at work inside America became an epidemic in the early 1950s. While there had been a Red Scare in the United States soon after the Russian Revolution of 1917, an even greater one emerged in the 1950s and became one of the main features of American political life. Surprisingly, it was the administration that had shaped an anti-Communist foreign policy that was attacked by those who claimed it was seriously infected by the "Communist conspiracy" and was "soft on communism."

The Red Scare hampered the Fair Deal in several ways. It distracted attention from reform, put the Truman administration on the defensive, completed the destruction of the radical left, thereby depriving reformers of helpful pressures from that direction, and raised doubts about the loyalty of liberals. Anyone who suggested the United States needed to be changed in important ways seemed "un-American" to many people in the early 1950s.

Communist penetration of the federal government had actually been quite insignificant. A few Communists had gone to work for the Agricultural Adjustment Administration (AAA), the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), senatorial investigating committees, and other parts of the government in the 1930s, but they were ineffective in pushing policy to the left. The group in the AAA, for example, had been purged before they could persuade their superiors to develop a serious interest in the rural poor. During World War II, Communists found jobs in various government agencies in Washington, including the State Department. Some passed information to Soviet agents, but they could not shape foreign policy, for they were only one group involved in the policy-making process and were far from the most important.

Despite the small size of the problem, Communism in America became a large issue, and the fact that it did so presented a problem for historians later on. At the time, many people believed that the administration was under the spell of the Communists. In contrast, some historians have blamed Truman and his aides for "McCarthyism," the extreme version of the Red Scare. While the administration played a part in the scare, it was a minor role in a complex picture and hardly the crucial factor in the rise of McCarthyism. Fear of the radical had long been a feature of American life, and that fear focused on Communists after the Russian Revolution. It gained new strength after World War II, promoted by the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), many Catholics, business groups, Republicans and others, including anti-Communists in the liberal and labor movements fighting for control of those movements.

The Truman administration responded to an already-developing phenomenon and contributed to its further development. A few members of the administration, particularly Tom Clark, who served as attorney general from 1945 to 1949, his successor, J. Howard McGrath, and their largely independent subordinate, J. Edgar Hoover, the director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), worried about the internal threat, or appeared to do so. Many others, including the President, did not regard it as serious, although they did not believe that Communists should hold government positions. Truman and others did fear that the Republicans would exploit the issue and use it for their own political purposes. Clark and Hoover argued, in 1946, that the Communist threat was large and growing. Claiming that even one disloyal government employee endangered security, they proposed a stronger internal security program. Administration leaders concluded that such a program could both protect the nation and prevent the Republicans from successfully seizing and exploiting the issue.

At the same time that it established containment, the Truman administration began to wage a campaign against domestic Communists. In 1947, the President established a loyalty-security program designed to provide "maximum protection . . . against infiltration of disloyal employees" into the federal service. To assist with the task of identifying the disloyal, the Attorney General developed a list of organizations deemed to be "totalitarian, fascist, communist, or subversive, or as having

adopted a policy of advocating or approving the commission of acts of force or violence to deny to others their rights under the Constitution . . . or as seeking to alter the form of government . . . by unconstitutional means." In the next five years, the program produced no evidence of espionage and, at a time when the federal government employed well over 2 million citizens, found fewer than 300 people worthy of being dismissed from or refused employment with the federal government because they were "security risks."

In addition to the loyalty program, the administration moved against the national leaders of the Communist party in the United States. In 1948, the Justice Department, using the Smith Act, of 1940, which proscribed advocacy of subversion as well as subversive acts, successfully prosecuted the leaders for conspiring to form a party to teach and advocate the overthrow of the government by force and violence. Three years later, the Supreme Court, in the Dennis case, upheld the convictions. Basing his opinion on interpretations of the world situation and the nature of the Communist party, Chief Justice Vinson argued that since Congress had the power to protect the government against armed rebellion it had the power to restrict freedom of speech when the lawmakers concluded that the national security demanded restriction. "Speech is not an absolute, above and beyond control by the legislature," he insisted. Vinson, who had been Truman's choice as Chief Justice, agreed with the top legal officer in the administration, Attorney General McGrath, that the Communists were a serious internal threat. McGrath maintained that there were "many Communists in America" and that each carried "the germ of death for society."

During the 1948 campaign, Truman used the Communist issue to his own advantage. He presented his party as the effective foe of Communism and charged that the Republicans were "unwittingly the ally of the Communists in this country." To support his claim, he pointed to the "strong foreign policy" that he had developed and that "checked" the "Communist tide," the domestic programs of the Roosevelt-Truman administration that prevented the Communists from making "any progress whatever in this country," and his loyalty program that made certain "that Communists and other disloyal persons are not employed by the Federal Government." On the other side of the ledger, he listed "considerable opposition from the Republican rank and

file . . . in Congress" to his foreign aid program and successful Republican opposition to his efforts "to strengthen democracy at home." He also charged that Republican investigations of Communism were both ineffective and harmful. They lacked "the democratic safeguards of the loyalty program."

Wallace's presence in the campaign helped Truman on this issue. He charged that the Communists backed Wallace because they wanted a Republican victory, and he explained that they wanted a Republican administration in Washington for they thought its "reactionary policies" would "lead to the confusion and strife on which communism thrives."

Truman's record distressed civil libertarians. They charged that his loyalty program violated the requirement of due process of law. The accused could not learn the identity of or confront the people who had testified against him, and he was forced to attempt to prove his own innocence. They also maintained that the program appeared to identify intellectual curiosity and reform with Communism, harmed government service, and seriously damaged the lives of individuals who had not endangered the security of the United States. The liberal critics suggested that the administration should discard the vague concept "loyalty," focus only on "security," and limit the program to "sensitive positions."

Liberals also attacked the administration's move against the Communist leaders. Dissenting in the Dennis case, Justice Douglas ridiculed the administration for believing that it must jail Communists to protect the nation. According to Douglas, Communists in the United States were "miserable merchants of unwanted ideas" whose "wares remain unsold." Justice Black, also in dissent, hoped that "in calmer times" the Court would "restore the First Amendment liberties to the high preferred place where they belong in a free society."

By the time the Court spoke, Truman himself had become much more critical of the Red Scare. It had taken on proportions that seemed dangerous and, in fact, it had turned on him.

Other factors played a larger role than Truman and his administration in the rise of the anti-Communist crusade. A series of frustrating developments after 1948, including the Communist victory in China, the development of the Russian atomic bomb, and the Korean War, stimulated the Red Scare. It was influenced also by some spy cases, especially the Hiss case. And

the unhappiness of many conservatives and the needs of Republicans also contributed to its growth. Conservatives, especially conservative Republicans, felt a deep sense of frustration. They disliked the domestic changes of the Roosevelt-Truman period and recent developments in foreign affairs; they felt cheated by the presidential victories in 1940, 1944, and 1948, believing they deserved to control the executive branch. Using their powers of investigation in a Congress that they dominated, they suggested that the executive branch was run by Communists. They hoped their efforts would encourage the voters to shift power to conservative hands.

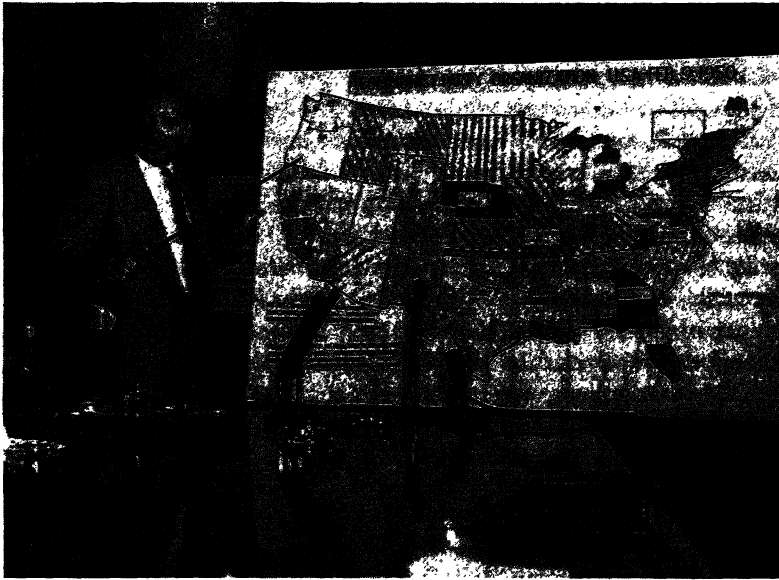
By the early 1950s, Congress was spearheading the anti-Communist crusade and subjecting the Truman administration to attack. In 1945-1946, Congress conducted only four investigations of Communism and subversion, but by 1951-1952, the number had jumped to thirty-four. The leading investigator was the House Committee on Un-American Activities, which had been established in 1938. It publicized the "disloyal" acts of individuals, including affiliation with "disloyal" organizations, hoping that the individuals would be punished by society. This committee and others waged spectacular investigations in the late 1940s and early 1950s. While they concentrated on finding Communists in government, they included in their investigations unions, the movie industry, and minority groups.

The most sensational episode of the Red Scare focused on Alger Hiss and Whittaker Chambers. A baffling duo, both were marked by troubled early years but had achieved some success as adults: Chambers with *Time* magazine, Hiss in the State Department. Hiss was an ambitious, attractive man, seemingly calm under fire, intelligent, and charming. Chambers, a less-slim, less-well-dressed man and a former member of the Communist underground who had broken with the Communist party in 1938, charged before HUAC in August 1948 that he knew Hiss as a party member in the 1930s, and that Hiss was eager to move American policy in Communist directions. When Hiss denied the charge and sued Chambers for libel, Chambers went further, maintaining that Hiss had committed espionage by passing secret State Department documents to Chambers for transmission to the Soviet Union. Hiss denied the charges, but was indicted by a grand jury. A first trial jury failed to convict him, but his second trial ended in a conviction in January 1950. Evidence supplied by

a rug, a loan, a car, typed documents, and the contradictions in Hiss's testimony persuaded the jurors that Hiss had perjured himself when describing his relations with Chambers in the 1930s. But the conviction did not end the controversy. Combatants in public debate frequently converted the men into symbols. Conservatives saw Hiss as evidence to support their theory that recent history had been shaped by Communist conspirators. They portrayed Chambers as a hero, a man who was willing to destroy his own career to serve as a witness against the enemies of Western civilization. On the other side, however, many liberals, though not all, viewed Hiss as the innocent victim of efforts to discredit the policies of the Roosevelt-Truman administrations. Some even charged that Chambers had conspired with HUAC and the FBI to commit "forgery by typewriter."

Shortly after Hiss's conviction, a Republican senator from Wisconsin, Joseph R. McCarthy, emerged as the most prominent figure in the crusade against domestic Communists, and his needs and skills played roles in the rise of the movement that he came to personify. Elected to the Senate in 1946, he voted with Taft and the conservatives on domestic policy but with Vandenberg on international matters and had used the Communist issue occasionally. Now, he concluded that it could provide the vehicle he needed for reelection. On February 9, 1950, he announced his new convictions in a speech before the Republican women of Wheeling, West Virginia, and soon "McCarthyism" became a synonym for Red Scare.

In that speech and many others that followed, McCarthy supplied the American people with a conspiracy theory to explain recent history. His version of what was happening ignored encouraging developments, such as the economic recovery of Western Europe and the frustration of Communist parties there. Instead he focused attention on discouraging events, such as Russian domination of Eastern Europe, Mao's victory in China, and the Korean War. Each day, he maintained, the country was "losing on every front." Ignoring the complexities of world affairs, his explanation pinned the blame on disloyal men in the Democratic administration, especially the State Department. He suggested that this was the only way to account for the frustration of a superior people who had always succeeded in the past. "How can we account for our present situation unless we believe that men high in the government are



*McCarthy and the Red Menace (UPI)*

concerting to deliver us to disaster?" he asked. "This must be the product of a great conspiracy on a scale so immense as to dwarf any previous venture in the history of men."

The senator's portrayal of the conspiracy seriously distorted and misrepresented the documents he used. It relied heavily on the principle of guilt by association, and contained some confusing features. He varied the number of participants in the conspiracy and their relationship with Communism. The reporters who heard his Wheeling speech thought he referred to "two hundred and five" people who "were known to the Secretary of State as being members of the Communist party and who nevertheless are still working and shaping the policy of the State Department." But in the days that followed, he dropped the number to fifty-seven, and he placed different labels on them: "bad risks," "Communists," or "individuals who would appear to be either card-carrying members or certainly loyal to the Communist party, but who nevertheless are still helping to shape our foreign policy."

If unclear about some features of the conspiracy, McCarthy was consistent in describing other characteristics of the conspir-



ators. They were members of a well-educated elite; many were intellectuals, and many were men of great prestige. "The reason why we find ourselves in a position of impotency . . . is the traitorous actions of those who have been treated so well by this nation." He proclaimed:

It has not been the less fortunate or members of the minority groups who have been selling this Nation out but rather those who have had all the benefits the wealthiest nation on earth has had to offer—the finest homes, the finest college education, and the finest jobs in the Government we can give.

One target was Dean Acheson, son of an Episcopal bishop, graduate of Yale, a friend of Alger Hiss, and a product of Harvard Law School, who McCarthy described as a "pompous diplomat in striped pants, with a phony British accent"; another was George Marshall. Focusing on the latter's wartime strategy and his postwar policy in the Far East, the senator attacked the general as "a man steeped in falsehood . . . who has recourse to the lie whenever it suits his convenience" and who was part of "a conspiracy so immense and an infamy so black as to dwarf any previous ventures in the history of men. . . ." According to McCarthy, the decisions of this man, who had been the champion of the European Recovery Program, "always and invariably" served "the world policy of the Kremlin." Marshall would "sell his grandmother for any advantage."

McCarthy failed to prove his case. A typical performance was his attack on Owen Lattimore, a Far Eastern specialist from Johns Hopkins University. According to McCarthy, Lattimore was the "top Russian espionage agent" in the United States, "the top Russian spy," "the top of the whole ring of which Hiss was a part," and "one of the principal architects of our Far Eastern policy." Senate investigators discovered, however, that the professor was not a spy or a Communist, and that he had not been an employee of the State Department, although he had working relations with it at times. He was, however, a well-known academic who had written books on Asia and Far Eastern policy that presented views similar to some of those of the Chinese Communists. Thus, the senator retreated, saying that he feared he had "perhaps placed too much stress on the question of whether or not he had been an espionage agent." But, never one

to retreat completely, McCarthy expressed confidence that one could "ask almost any school child who the architect of our Far Eastern policy is" and he would say "Owen Lattimore."

Hurling charges such as these, McCarthy made himself into a major figure in American politics in the early 1950s. He found a charged situation and skillfully exploited it. The situation included discouraging developments in international affairs, and the Wisconsin senator had the character and abilities needed to take advantage of it. He used the press, moved from charge to charge, and engaged in vicious personal attacks. He provided a simple explanation for discouraging events and suggested that the problems could be solved without great expenditures. Expressing what some have called the illusion of American omnipotence, he suggested that solutions would be found once traitors were removed from office and true Americans were placed in control. He suggested, for example, that the nation should follow the advice of General MacArthur and employ his strategy against the Chinese, a strategy that seemed certain to produce great results at low cost and in a short time. In contrast with McCarthy, those he attacked emphasized complexities, uncertainties, and the limits on American power. To the senator's admirers, his targets seemed weak, cowardly, and indecisive.

McCarthy successfully identified himself with frustrated and ambitious conservatives. He expressed in a unique way a view that was long held in conservative circles and that was now more widely endorsed as a consequence of the American struggle with Russia and China: the view that radicals constituted a serious threat to American institutions. He did not create this view or the issue he exploited. They already existed, and he made them his own. He did not even do his own research. Lacking a major committee assignment, he drew heavily upon investigations by Congressman Richard Nixon of California and the House Un-American Activities Committee and by the right-wing press, especially the McCormick and Hearst groups. He repeated charges that they had developed. They, in turn, stepped up their own use of the issue. It was, for example, a major theme in Nixon's successful campaign for the Senate in 1950.

Conservative Republicans were McCarthy's most active supporters. The list included prominent members of Congress: Brewster of Maine and Bridges of New Hampshire in the East;

Wherry of Nebraska, Jenner of Indiana, Mundt of South Dakota, Dirksen of Illinois, and Hickenlooper of Iowa in the Middle West; and Welker of Idaho and Knowland of California in the West. "If one case doesn't work, then bring up another," Taft advised McCarthy. Bricker of Ohio provided words of encouragement: "Joe, you're a dirty son of a bitch, but there are times when you've got to have a son of a bitch around, and this is one of them."

Although McCarthy himself was not an effective legislator, the phenomenon he represented did influence congressional legislation. Congress, as part of the Taft-Hartley Act, required labor leaders to sign affidavits that they were not Communists and did not believe in the overthrow of the United States government by illegal or unconstitutional means. After the outbreak of the Korean War, the lawmakers passed the McCarran Internal Security Act of 1950 providing the government with a battery of weapons to use against Communists and other radicals. Included in the act was a requirement that they must register with the attorney general and a provision that authorized the detention in special camps during national emergencies of people deemed likely to commit espionage and sedition. Then, in 1952, Congress passed the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act which barred the immigration of "subversives" and permitted the attorney general to deport immigrants with Communist affiliations even after they had become citizens.

Truman vetoed these bills, convinced that the anti-Communist crusade had become a threat to American freedom. "Instead of striking blows at communism," the provisions of the McCarran bill would, he maintained, "strike blows at our own liberties and at our position in the forefront of those working for freedom in the world." He referred to the deportation provisions of the McCarran-Walter bill as "worse than the infamous Alien Act of 1798" and "inconsistent with our democratic ideals."

Congress overrode the President's vetoes, a testimony to the great strength of the Red Scare, which was now affecting nearly every part of American life. State and local governments made their own investigations and passed their own antisubversive laws, including laws requiring government employees to sign loyalty oaths, outlawing the Communist party, and barring Communists from government employment. Corporations, unions, the entertainment industry, and other private groups

behaved in similar ways. The labor movement purged Communists from its ranks, and many employers fired employees regarded as "dangerous." Hostility toward "radical" teachers was especially strong, resulting in frequent investigations and many dismissals. Books were also banned. Observers noted "a subtle, creeping paralysis of freedom of thought and speech," "an erosion of freedom," and "voluntary censorship."

The Supreme Court accepted the state and local manifestations of the Red Scare as well as the national ones. Most justices had an indulgent attitude toward the loyalty programs, and the Court usually upheld investigations of Communist activities. In one of the first cases involving academic freedom, *Adler v. Board of Education of New York City*, the Court, in 1952, upheld a New York law providing for removal of public school teachers on loyalty grounds and accepting membership in certain organizations as evidence of disloyalty. Speaking for the majority, Justice Minton, another Truman appointee, denied that the law restricted the rights of teachers to assemble, speak, think, and believe as they wished. He insisted that they had "no right to work for the school system on their own terms"; they could either "work for the school system upon the reasonable terms laid down by the proper authorities of New York" or "retain their beliefs and associations and go elsewhere." The decision was praised by the *New York Sun* for putting "into plain words exactly what most loyal American parents and taxpayers have long felt and will continue to feel."

Although McCarthy encountered opposition, it could not check his rise. Much of the press was critical, as was the Truman administration. According to the President, McCarthy, and others like him, were "chipping away our basic freedoms just as insidiously and far more effectively than the Communists have ever been able to do," and they had "created such a wave of fear and uncertainty that their attacks upon our liberties go almost unchallenged." Such arguments, however, failed to rally the public behind the President, perhaps because he and his aides had so frequently preached the dangers of Communism themselves, although, considering the mood of the day, Truman might have been even less successful if he had not had an anti-Communist record to which he could point. He would surely have accomplished more if the Senate had supplied strong opposition to McCarthy. But only a minority of senators opposed

their Wisconsin colleague, while most Southern senators and some other Democrats, such as McCarran of Nevada, tolerated him. Moreover, many senators feared his effect on their reelection. As a result of his strong participation in the congressional elections of 1950, he gained a reputation for great political effectiveness, especially when Tydings of Maryland, a Senate veteran and a McCarthy critic, was defeated by a McCarthy-backed candidate who pictured this rather conservative Democrat as a man with Communist ties and inclinations. In the Senate, most of the active opposition came from a small band of liberals, including Lehman of New York, Kefauver of Tennessee, Hennings of Missouri, and McMahon of Connecticut. Most of his foes were new to the Senate and incapable of leading it. Benton of Connecticut, for example, failed in 1951 to persuade his colleagues that they should expel McCarthy.

While Truman obviously contributed to the rise of the Red Scare, other people and other forces participated to a far greater extent. Truman, his administration, his party, and his domestic programs were also victims of the phenomenon. McCarthyism demoralized the State Department and encouraged it to become quite inflexible in order to prove its loyalty. The movement weakened the Truman administration by constantly suggesting that it was "soft" on Communism and insensitive to its dangers in American life and government. It also helped Republicans in their campaigns for office in the early 1950s, and virtually forced the surrender of the Fair Deal. The Fair Deal constituted an effort to change American life, but the politics of the early 1950s were dominated by desires to protect established institutions against apparent threats at home and abroad. The Fair Deal was Truman's offensive against several social and economic problems, but, before the end of his years as President, Truman was spending much of his time defending himself against charges that he was not doing enough to safeguard the nation.

Truman functioned in a tough situation that placed narrow limits on his accomplishments in domestic affairs, but his effect was not insignificant. Although he had great difficulty in creating new programs, he did expand and improve already-established ones and defended them against their foes. In addition, by publicizing various issues, such as health insurance, he prepared the way for future change. More than any of his predecessors, he identified the presidency with the cause of civil

rights. Encouraged by the international situation, he supported this cause. In the armed forces, a part of American life that had gained new importance, he went so far as to order social change. At the same time, he contributed to the growth of the Red Scare that, in turn, contributed to his failures at home.

## Chapter 5

### The Republican Restoration

Intense unhappiness with Truman and Democratic rule was evident in the elections of 1952, which restored Republican control of both Congress and the White House for the first time since 1930. Still, these years of Republican rule were years of continuity. One change voters seemed to want was a substantial reduction in the size and cost of the federal government, yet the government continued to play a large and expensive role in economic affairs. While the new President shared the hope of reducing the size and cost of the federal government, he failed to accomplish these objectives.

Prospects for real change seemed good when the Republicans came to power in January 1953. The people of the right were especially eager for change in America. They had a strong dislike for the domestic and foreign politics that had been developed since 1932 and were inclined to blame them on Communist influences. They were critical of big labor and even more hostile to big government. According to Senator Taft, the Republican right's leading presidential hopeful in the 1952 election, the fundamental issue in the elections was "the resumption and continuation of progress under a free American way of life, as opposed to the alleged advances to be obtained by surrendering our money and our freedom to the tender mercies of an all-powerful and arbitrary government." The country stood at a "crossroads" because liberty was threatened by "big govern-

ment, government which has already grown in spending power to a point where it threatens to dominate the lives of all of us." The Ohio senator, however, did not get his party's nomination because of his foreign policy views, which were regarded as isolationist, and because many found his personality cold and unattractive.

Rather than Taft, the Republicans nominated a candidate from among the "moderate" Republicans, who were less critical of the domestic and foreign policies of the Roosevelt-Truman administration than was Taft. They selected a military hero with a warm and appealing personality, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, a choice that illustrated the influence of the nation's role in the world on domestic politics and the rise of the military to new prominence, for American participation in World War II elevated him from an obscure soldier to a national hero, and containment gave him new opportunities, especially as NATO's first commander. Although involved in major policy matters for a decade, Eisenhower never paid much attention to politics and had refused to run as a Democrat in 1948, arguing that a professional soldier should stay out of the White House. Now,



*Ike and Taft (Wide World Photos)*



however, he agreed to become the Republican presidential candidate.

The Republican right, however, did not suffer total defeat. It influenced the platform and, with the selection of Senator Richard Nixon as the vice-presidential candidate, it had a representative on the ticket. Furthermore, Eisenhower made promises to Taft to get his active support. The Republican party, the Ohio senator maintained during the campaign, rejected "the whole theory of socialism and big government as reactionary and destructive of human liberty," and the party proposed "to resume progress, stimulated and assisted by Government, without Government control and regulation" and promised "to reduce expenses and to cut taxes." The rhetoric of the Republican campaign encouraged some voters to believe that the federal government, or at least large parts of it, would come tumbling down.

The size of Eisenhower's victory in November seemed to suggest that he had the power to produce the results he desired. In a high turnout election, he swept to victory by a wide margin with many Democrats defecting to vote for him. The general received nearly 34 million votes, 6.5 million more than his opponent, Governor Adlai Stevenson of Illinois. Supported by all classes, Eisenhower made a breakthrough in the traditionally Democratic South, made significant gains in the large Northern cities where Democrats had dominated since 1928, swept the suburbs, and restored Republican control in the towns and rural areas of the Middle and Far West. Unhappiness with the course of American foreign policy and the war, fears of Communism, and concern about corruption and inflation influenced the outcome. Confidence in Eisenhower's amiable and warm personality was an additional factor in his victory.

Republican victories in the congressional elections gave the party control of Congress and strengthened the assumption that change was at hand. Actually, in the congressional elections, the Republicans did not enjoy a spectacular victory. While Eisenhower's popularity was somewhat of a help, congressional candidates ran far behind their party leader and gained only small majorities in the House and Senate, for millions of voters still feared Republican economic policies. The victories were enough, however, to enable the conservatives to move into leadership positions in the new Congress. Taft became the

Senate majority leader, but died in the spring. He was replaced by William Knowland of California, who was, if anything, more conservative.

Furthermore, Eisenhower's appointments encouraged those who disliked what the New Deal and Fair Deal had done to relations between government and economy. The new President, in keeping with Republican tradition, his own great confidence in businessmen, and his doubts about the economic abilities of the federal government, appointed many business leaders to positions of power in Washington. After the war, Eisenhower had developed close ties with businessmen, often joining them in games of golf and other activities. Thomas Watson, Sr., of IBM, and Douglas Black, of Doubleday, used their influence to assure Eisenhower's appointment as president of Columbia University in 1947. Others—including Winthrop Aldrich, the chairman of the Board of the Chase National Bank; Harry A. Bullis, the chairman of the Board of General Mills; and Paul Hoffman, a former president of Studebaker—actively participated in his presidential campaign. All disliked the domestic policies of the Democrats and the foreign policies of the Midwestern Republicans; they found Eisenhower quite satisfactory on both counts, and they saw him as a winner.

The new cabinet, one observer pointed out, was composed of "eight millionaires and a plumber." The plumber was Martin Durkin, a labor leader who became Secretary of Labor. But he did not last long. He campaigned for revision of the Taft-Hartley Act and came to be viewed by Eisenhower and others as a representative of a "special interest." He resigned after less than eight months, and was replaced by James P. Mitchell, a vice-president of Bloomingdale Brothers department stores. The lawyers who were appointed Attorney General and Secretary of State, Herbert Brownell and John Foster Dulles, had close and prosperous connections with the corporate world, and the new Secretary of Agriculture, Ezra Taft Benson, had been a manager and Washington lobbyist for the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives and had strong links with a leading representative of the large commercial farmers, the American Farm Bureau Federation. George Humphrey of the Mark A. Hanna Company, which was active in coal, iron-ore, steel, copper, oil, natural gas, rayon, plastics, shipping and banking, was appointed secretary of the treasury and became especially close to the president and particularly influential in economic policies.

The president of General Motors, Charles E. Wilson, became Secretary of Defense. While serving in Washington during World War II, he had insisted that "this defense business is big business. . . . Small plants can't make tanks, airplanes, or other complex armaments." His company received contracts worth about \$14 billion then, and was later the biggest contractor during the Korean War. According to Wilson, business and the military needed one another—they must have good relations. He also believed that "what was good for our country was good for General Motors, and vice versa."

Men from the retail end of the automobile industry, Douglas McKay and Arthur Summerfield, became Secretary of Interior and Postmaster General respectively; Robert Stevens moved from the textile industry to the top civilian position in the army; Harold Talbott of Chrysler and North American Aviation became Secretary of the Air Force, and Joseph Dodge, the president of The Detroit Bank, took on new responsibilities as Director of the Budget.

The public did not oppose this pattern of appointment. According to a poll in 1953, 78 percent of the people approved and only 14 percent disliked it. Most Americans had confidence in business leaders, and many lacked confidence in professional politicians.

The new leaders in Washington believed that private action was the best means of solving problems and promoting progress. In his first State of the Union message, Eisenhower spoke of rejuvenating free enterprise by reducing government controls. Shortly thereafter, he criticized the "creeping socialism" of the previous twenty years, using the Tennessee Valley Authority to illustrate his point. He wished that the government could sell this carry-over from the New Deal. His cabinet officers expressed themselves in similar ways. "Too many Americans are calling on Washington to do for them what they should be willing to do for themselves," Benson maintained. He talked of restoring the "free market" in agriculture by freeing the farmer from government controls. He and others spoke of the evil of government interference with the freedom of business to make profits. "Jobs are created . . . by people using their money to expand existing businesses or start new businesses in the hope of making a profit," Humphrey argued. "If government policy is such as to make a profit unlikely or very difficult, people simply aren't going to launch the new ventures from which new jobs grow."

In line with these ideas, the new administration removed the wage and price controls that had been established during the Korean War. It obtained passage of legislation that gave the states, rather than Washington, control of millions of acres of oil-rich submerged land along the coasts, that checked the expansion of public production of electrical power, and that reduced price supports for farmers. According to Benson, the new farm program would provide "a maximum reliance on the cooperative and competitive efforts of free men and a minimum of dependence on government control."

Hostility toward large-scale government spending occupied an especially important place in administration thinking. According to the new Secretary of the Treasury, and supported by other officials in key economic positions, a balanced budget was the most vital aspect of a sound government, and reduction in spending, not an increase in taxes, was the best way to wipe out a deficit. High levels of expenditure and deficit financing would seriously hurt the nation. It would impose a large and wasteful burden on the economy and would destroy the confidence of businessmen.

Despite these theories, the national government did not wither away during the Eisenhower years. Although the administration cut expenditures from more than \$74 billion in fiscal 1953 to less than \$65 billion in fiscal 1955, the level of spending far exceeded that of the Truman administration during the pre-Korean War period when expenditures were below \$40 billion.

Similarly, the administration did not deny that the central government had some responsibility for the performance of the economy or that fiscal policy should be a major instrument for the discharge of that responsibility. In 1953, officials saw inflation as the major economic problem facing the nation. They defended cuts in spending as a means of combatting inflation, and successfully resisted pressures for tax cuts from some business groups and conservatives in Congress.

Eisenhower's relations with the Council of Economic Advisers, which was established by the Employment Act of 1946, provides evidence that he accepted a measure of economic responsibility for government and the value of fiscal policy. In 1953, the survival of the council was threatened by conservative congressmen, who saw the agency as a center of unsound economic theories. The President not only saved it, he appointed a

professional economist, Arthur F. Burns of Columbia University rather than a corporation executive, as its chairman. Although Burns placed heavy emphasis upon "business confidence" and was extremely cautious in advocating government action, he believed that the federal government had fundamental economic responsibilities, and that government fiscal policy was an important instrument. "Experience during the postwar period," he would write after leaving the administration, "has demonstrated that the monetary and fiscal policies of government can have a powerful influence on the course of the economy without subjecting specific activities to regulation."

The recession of 1953-1954 hampered the administration's efforts to scale down the size of the federal establishment. By mid-1953, the Korean War had ended and the administration cut defense spending sharply. The change triggered a recession that moved unemployment from less than 2 percent of the work force in the summer of 1953 to more than 6 percent a year later. As the economy moved downhill, administration leaders grappled feverishly with economic problems and reaffirmed the theory that the government must combat such developments. Eisenhower insisted that he was ready to use the full power of government, if necessary, to prevent another major depression. The administration stepped up its efforts to persuade Congress to reform the tax system in order to stimulate investment. It accelerated government purchases, accepted a cut in the excise tax sponsored by congressional Republicans, and privately discussed other ways to promote recovery. The economic situation and the solutions needed for recovery were diametrically opposed to the administration's desire to cut spending and reduce the deficit.

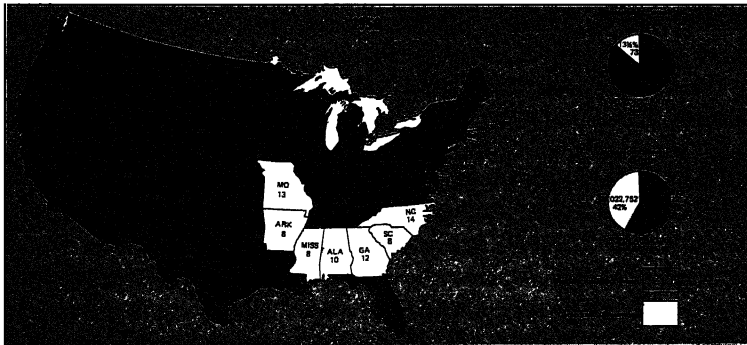
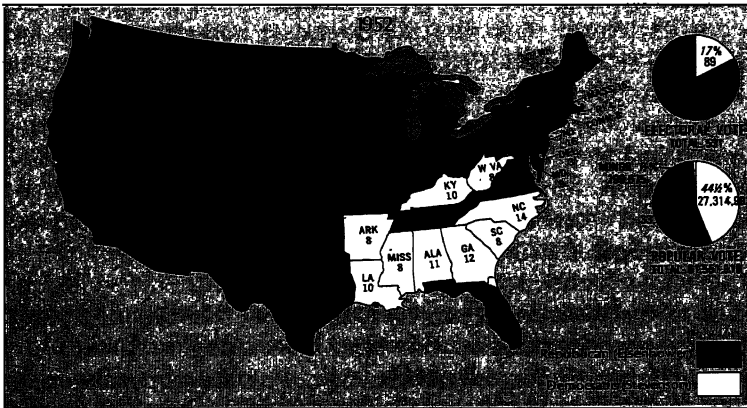
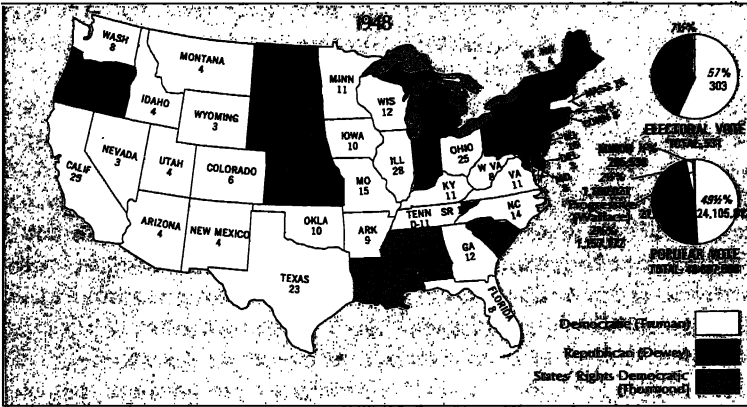
At the same time, however, the administration rejected demands for large-scale deficit financing to bring the nation out of the recession. Liberals and labor leaders, led by Paul Douglas, Democratic senator from Illinois, and Walter Reuther, the president of the CIO, called for massive spending programs and a large tax cut for lower-income groups. But administration officials turned down these proposals, although they claimed they would be willing to use such weapons when necessary. They insisted, instead, that the recession did not call for such drastic measures, and warned against words and actions that might shatter confidence in the future of the American economy.

Theories about the dangers of government spending and about the most desirable types of tax reform, as well as an appraisal of the situation, influenced the administration's behavior.

The recession strengthened, rather than weakened, the administration's fundamental ideas about the relative importance of government and business. After the business cycle hit bottom in mid-1954 and inflationary pressures began to grow once again, the administration resumed its battle against deficit financing and continued to resist efforts to increase spending. It rejected liberal spending proposals, even though government receipts were increasing, and reduced the government debt. The strength of the private enterprise system, the administration maintained, was chiefly responsible for the recovery. Efforts to promote business confidence were the most important government actions taken. The "full and free energies of labor and industry, of private organizations and individual citizens" are "the energies that make America prosper and grow," Eisenhower claimed in 1956. The nation must not "turn back . . . to the unsound, inflationary, anti-business, heavy-tax, heavy-spending, Government interference, centralized control policies from which this country has so recently been rescued. . . ."

Nevertheless, even though he had come through the recession, Eisenhower could not scale down the government's role. The recession itself provided new evidence of the value of the Social Security program with its pensions and unemployment insurance, for they had helped to sustain purchasing power. Thus, the Republican President not only continued this New Deal program, he successfully promoted extension of its coverage and increases in the benefits paid, convinced that it would help the country avoid another great depression.

The postrecession economy generated its own demands for government spending. By the mid-fifties, the nation's highways, which had not been improved significantly for many years, were woefully inadequate for the rapidly growing number of cars, trucks, and buses that used them. Republicans had traditionally advocated government action to enlarge transportation facilities. In the party's early years, it supported expansion of the railroads, and, in the 1920s, it emphasized the need for a national system of roads and highways. Eisenhower in 1955 proposed that the federal government spend \$31 billion in the next ten years for the construction of a system of interstate superhigh-



### *The Republican Restoration: Elections of 1948, 1952, and 1956*

ways. "The highway system is a public enterprise," he observed. "As the owner and operator, the various levels of government have a responsibility for management that promotes the economy of the Nation and properly serves the individual user." Congress responded by authorizing the expenditure of even more money than was requested.

Congressional response to the highway program illustrated Eisenhower's new political situation. His party had lost control of Congress in 1954, chiefly because of the recession. As a result, there was a reduction in the power of one congressional group, the conservative Republicans, that provided many major proponents of sharp cuts in the size and cost of government. The election strengthened those Republicans who advised that their party must have a more positive attitude toward government in order to solve problems and win elections. Most important, the election strengthened the Democrats, including those who demanded more spending on certain projects and tax cuts that would stimulate consumption. Not surprisingly, the administration now developed and gained acceptance of a new farm proposal in 1956. The "Soil Bank" program was a New Deal-type program that sought to reduce agricultural production and promote soil conservation by paying farmers to take some of their land out of production of cash crops.

The new political scene also meant that the President now had to work with Democrats in Congress. He did not become heavily dependent upon liberals like Douglas. Instead, he cultivated the Democratic leadership, which was predominantly Southern and headed by two Texans, Sam Rayburn, the speaker of the House, and Lyndon Johnson, the Senate majority leader. Although Rayburn and Johnson did not press for a vast expansion of government, they would not tolerate destruction of the New Deal-Fair Deal programs that their party had constructed. They were eager to cooperate with the President, but they were also eager to unite the members of their party in the Congress.

Eisenhower's theory of the presidency restrained him in his dealings with the new Democratic majority. He believed that Roosevelt and Truman had been too vigorous in their exercise of power. According to Eisenhower, a president should be more modest, more humble, and more respectful of the separation of powers. His limited experience in politics and his serious health problems in 1955-1956 increased his determination to avoid con-



flicts with congressmen and pressure groups. While he would talk with congressmen, he was reluctant to coerce and pressure them, and he was unwilling to wage the kinds of battles required to reduce substantially the power of the federal government and the size of the federal budget. Furthermore, he hoped to unite rather than divide the nation.

Shady activities of businessmen also contributed to the failure to reduce Washington's role in the nation's economic affairs. Several cases involving efforts by businessmen to shape public policies for personal gains came to light, through the effort of critics of the administration in Congress and the press. Such scandals defeated some specific proposals; they revived and kept alive the notion that businessmen were not completely reliable and, therefore, the nation should not become too dependent on them.

Thus, spending moved up rather than down. While the Republicans controlled Congress in 1953-1954, federal spending dropped nearly \$10 billion, but in 1955-1956 it increased by nearly \$5 billion.

Finally, Eisenhower failed in the 1956 elections to produce a redistribution of power that would support his ideas. He did, however, achieve a large personal victory. Projecting his attractive personality and picturing his policies as responsible for peace and prosperity, he made greater inroads in the South and especially impressive gains in the cities; he defeated Stevenson by more than 9 million votes. Confidence in Eisenhower remained high, but he failed to make the Republican party the nation's majority party. The Democrats increased their margin of control in Congress, making 1956 the first year since 1848 in which one party won the presidential election while the other won the congressional contest.

The Republican right found the election particularly discouraging. Even before November, conservative Republicans had been dissatisfied with Eisenhower's performance as party leader. But they hoped he would restore them to control of Congress and give them another chance to reduce the size and cost of government. Now, he had failed to do so, and they could not achieve their goals.

Some sense of failure also gripped the executive branch. Early in 1957, Secretary Humphrey predicted "a depression that will curl your hair, because we are just taking too much money

out of this economy that we need to make the jobs that you have to have as time goes on." And the President, regarding himself unable to decrease spending, encouraged Congress to find ways to cut his own budget.

Thus, the Republicans only regained partial control of the national government in the 1950s. They failed to gain enough power to produce large-scale changes. Despite their theories and their efforts, the national government was again growing, before the end of Eisenhower's first term, and the 1956 elections offered no assurances that this course would be reversed. The federal government seemed certain to remain a big government.

## Chapter 6

### The Continuation of Containment

The Eisenhower foreign policy was characterized more by continuity than by change. It continued the containment policy that had been developed by the Truman administration, with some modifications. The changes made, however, did not conflict with developments in the late years of Truman's presidency. The policy became more clearly global in scope, and, although the military establishment was reduced in size, Washington continued to rely chiefly upon military power to achieve its objectives. Although the administration expressed a desire for large-scale change, it was not strong enough to triumph over realities favoring the status quo. Thus, the foreign policy that had been created by the Truman administration continued to be *the* American foreign policy.

The new administration continued the containment policy despite the pressures for change that had been mounting since 1949. Critics, assuming that the nation was sufficiently powerful to prevent such developments as the Communist victories in Eastern Europe and China, blamed American leadership for those victories. They also demanded both larger accomplishments and smaller efforts in world affairs. The United States could accomplish more than containment, using less money and manpower.

Although the Dewey-Eisenhower faction of the Republican

party did not endorse much of the criticism of Truman's policies, the Republican platform of 1952 reflected the mounting desires for change. Dewey had endorsed containment in the 1948 election; Eisenhower had participated in the development of it, especially as NATO's commanding general, and he and his chief supporters feared Taft's stand on foreign policy, regarding him as an isolationist. The party platform did not endorse isolationism, but in the foreign policy plank prepared by John Foster Dulles (who had also participated in the development of Truman's foreign policies but who hoped to be acceptable to both factions in his party), the Republicans called for the death of "the negative, futile and immoral policy of 'containment' which abandons countless human beings to a despotism and godless terrorism which in turn enables the rulers to forge the captives into a weapon for our destruction," and promised to substitute a policy of liberation. It would be made clear "that the United States policy, as one of its peaceful purposes, looks happily forward to the genuine independence of those captive peoples."

At the same time, the Republican platform promised to spend less than the Democrats had on foreign affairs. The nation's commitments abroad would not become so large that they would endanger "the economic health or sound finances of the United States." Warning that Stalin had promised to deliver the " 'decisive blow' . . . when the free nations were isolated and . . . in a state of 'practical bankruptcy,' " the GOP promised that Republicans would not allow the nation "to be isolated and economically strangled"—it would not let it "go bankrupt."

The Republicans seemed to promise two polar goals—an enlargement of objectives and a reduction of means. In the campaign that followed, they spoke frequently of the evils of containment and the need for new policies. While Nixon charged that the Democratic presidential candidate was a "Ph.D. graduate of Dean Acheson's cowardly College of Communist Containment," Eisenhower maintained that the administration had "allowed the godless Red tide to . . . engulf millions [and had] failed to see the Red Stain seeping into most vital offices of our Government." McCarthy, who had participated in the Republican National Convention and was influential in forming the party platform, worked hard in the congressional and presidential campaigns. He even charged that Stevenson had aided the "Communist cause," was "part and parcel of the Acheson-Hiss-Lattimore group," and would "continue the suicidal

Kremlin-directed policies of the nation." "If you will give me a slippery-elm club and put me aboard Adlai Stevenson's campaign train," McCarthy suggested, "I will use it on some of his advisers and perhaps I can make a good American of him."

The Republicans also tried to assure the voters that their methods would involve no risk. While the Truman administration had regarded liberation as an inevitable product of containment, the Republicans seemed to promise an earlier freeing of the people under Communist control. Influenced by hopes of uniting Republicans and shattering the Democratic coalition, which contained people with Eastern European backgrounds, the rhetoric of liberation alarmed some people, including Eisenhower, although he employed it himself. The "American conscience," he maintained, "can never know peace, until these people are restored again to being masters of their own fate." In response to the rising alarm, however, the champions of liberation insisted that they did not intend to use military force, and Republicans in the late stages of the campaign gave less attention to the Dulles doctrine than to the Korean War and Eisenhower's promise to end it. He would, he assured the voters, "go to Korea" as part of his effort "to bring the Korean War to an early and honorable end."

In efforts to demonstrate that, indeed, change was being made, Eisenhower appointed Dulles as Secretary of State, the administration employed the rhetoric of liberation, threatening a MacArthur-like policy to end the Korean War and announcing that the American navy would no longer prevent Chiang from moving back to the mainland. The Seventh Fleet, the President announced in his first State of the Union message, would "no longer be employed to shield Communist China." In addition, the administration rejected the theory of limited war that had taken shape in 1950-1952, embracing instead a theory of "massive retaliation." Rather than respond with conventional forces as it had in Korea, in the future the United States would use the weapons of mass destruction delivered by the Strategic Air Command.

The new military policy would, the administration assumed, provide both economic and military security. It would restrain the Soviet Union from aggressive acts, since the Russians would understand that their losses would outnumber their gains. Thus, the United States could reduce its forces stationed abroad, cut the size of the army, and slash military spending.

The "new look" that the administration gave to the nation's military policy was actually not as new as the rhetoric suggested. It was a theory used by the Truman administration before the Korean War. It involved the same emphases on air power and budgetary ceilings. But, although the new administration did end the Korean War and reduce the size of the army, it could not cut military spending below \$35 billion, which was its goal.

Although Eisenhower had spent his adult life in the army, he shared the interest in reducing its size and assured Americans that the change could be made without endangering the safety of the nation. He considered this to be a major part of his plan to reduce the size and cost of government and to revive individual initiative. He also hoped that comparable developments would take place in Russia, both countries diverting resources to domestic affairs. The President employed special advisers to develop disarmament proposals and embarked upon several "peace probes," including a "summit conference" at Geneva in the summer of 1955.

The new administration also talked about liberating "captive peoples," but it refused to participate forcefully in efforts of liberation. Rather than accept MacArthur's plans for the destruction of the Communist system in North Korea, Eisenhower pursued the negotiated settlement that Truman had sought, brought the war to an end in July 1953, and then kept an American military force in South Korea to discourage a new attack from the north. In the same year, the administration would not provide aid for rebels in an uprising in East Berlin. Three years later, Washington refused to intervene in rebellions in Poland and Hungary. Washington reasoned that American pressure in Poland would only cause the Russians to retract concessions that had been made to appease the rebels. And the administration felt incapable of helping the Hungarians because the United States did not have an adequate military force to send in, nor did it want to risk war with the Soviet Union. Thus, the Russians crushed the rebellion and tightened their control of Hungary.

The liberation policy amounted essentially to a restoration of the "get tough" policy of 1946. It was an attempt to use words to promote change. Congressmen hurled speeches at the Russians in 1953, the administration refused to recognize Communist China, and American propaganda agencies, especially the CIA-



*Eisenhower and Dulles with West German Leaders (Wide World Photos)*

supported Radio Free Europe, continued to use the rhetoric of liberation until 1956.

Advocates of liberation assumed that the force of human nature would eventually guarantee success of the policy. Thus, the United States did not need to use military force to accomplish its objective. Dulles predicted in 1952 that the mere public statement by the United States *"that it wants and expects liberation to occur . . . would change in an electrifying way, the mood of the captive peoples. . . . It would put heavy new burdens on the jailers and create new opportunities for liberation."* He added that the United States did "not want a series of bloody uprisings and reprisals." He insisted there could "be peaceful separation from Moscow." And the Republican platform had promised:

The policies we espouse will revive the contagious, liberating influences which are inherent in freedom. They will inevitably set up strains and stresses within the captive world which will make the rulers impotent to continue in their monstrous ways and mark the beginning of their end.

The Soviet system, accordingly, was out of harmony with human nature, which craved freedom, and thus the collapse of that system was inevitable. The United States needed only to supply encouragement.

Washington supported force on behalf of "liberation" only

in Iran and Guatemala, where American support involved the Central Intelligence Agency, not American troops. In 1951, the leader of the National Front, Mahammed Mossadegh, became premier of Iran, and the new government quickly nationalized the oil industry, setting off an extended dispute with the British, who previously controlled the industry. In 1953, the CIA supported the successful efforts by the Shah to depose Mossadegh. The following year, the Shah reached an agreement with Western oil companies, American as well as British, for work to resume.

In Guatemala, a reformist government, which included Communists, confiscated foreign-held properties, especially the holdings of the American-owned United Fruit Company, and refused to meet the compensation demands of United Fruit. Fearing that the regime was "Communist-dominated," and, therefore, a threat to the peace and security of the Western Hemisphere, Washington began to apply pressure. After Guatemala received arms from Czechoslovakia, the CIA aided a group of exiles, who invaded from Honduras and overthrew the government in 1954. Rather than criticize the act of the exiles as subversive and press for UN action against them, Secretary Dulles applauded the invasion and pledged the U. S. "not merely to political opposition to communism but to help alleviate conditions . . . which might afford communism an opportunity to spread its tentacles throughout the hemisphere."

The United States could make such moves without great risks in Iran and Guatemala, but similar moves in Eastern Europe or China would have been extremely dangerous. A strong desire to avoid war prevented a real change of policy from containment to liberation. The United States now had the hydrogen bomb, which had been successfully tested before Truman left office, but so did the Russians. A forceful policy of liberation, involving, say, military intervention in Eastern Europe, could have triggered a war of mass destruction. In contrast with containment, liberation was beyond the real power of the United States. It was also outside the limits of American needs. The United States could survive and even prosper in a world that included Communist control of Russia, Eastern Europe, China, and North Korea.

Before the end of Eisenhower's first term, the administration retreated from liberation in both theory and practice. Realizing



that it had generated unrealistic expectations of American help, it stopped talking about liberation after the Russians crushed the Hungarian uprising. Dulles had assumed that a combination of containment, the force of human nature, and the rhetoric of liberation would free the people controlled by Communism. Now, however, by dropping the rhetoric, the administration made all but an explicit return to the policy of the Truman administration.

Eisenhower and Dulles even accepted a Communist advance in Southeast Asia, before redrawing the line in that part of the world. Their acceptance was similar to the Roosevelt-Truman administrations' acceptance of postwar developments in Eastern Europe and China. Eisenhower and Dulles continued the commitment that Truman and Acheson had made to the French in Indochina. The Republicans, just like the Democrats, believed that a Communist victory in any part of Southeast Asia would lead quickly to Communist victories elsewhere. Furthermore, those victories would deprive the United States of strategically important commodities (tin, tungsten, rubber, and oil) and would have an especially damaging impact on a major American ally, Japan. The Republican leaders also agreed with their predecessors that military intervention by the Chinese Communists in Southeast Asia would force the United States to participate in the fighting and that the French cause and American support for it were essential. Thus, the United States became the chief supplier of the French military effort; it increased aid after the Korean War was ended, and pressed the French to carry on until a military victory was achieved.

Despite American aid, the French position deteriorated in early 1954, and by March, the possibility of a Communist victory was strong. At this point, the French asked the Americans for still more aid, to save the garrison at Dien Bien Phu in northern Vietnam. Washington agreed, sending more military supplies and technicians. The French, however, wanted more—they wanted their ally to intervene militarily, using air strikes against Ho Chi Minh. The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Arthur Radford, proposed massive American air attacks, including the use of three tactical atomic bombs. Vice-President Nixon warmed to the idea, and added that it might also be necessary to send in American troops. Eisenhower and Dulles considered the proposals seriously, for they regarded the

area as crucial. According to the President, "You have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you have the beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences."

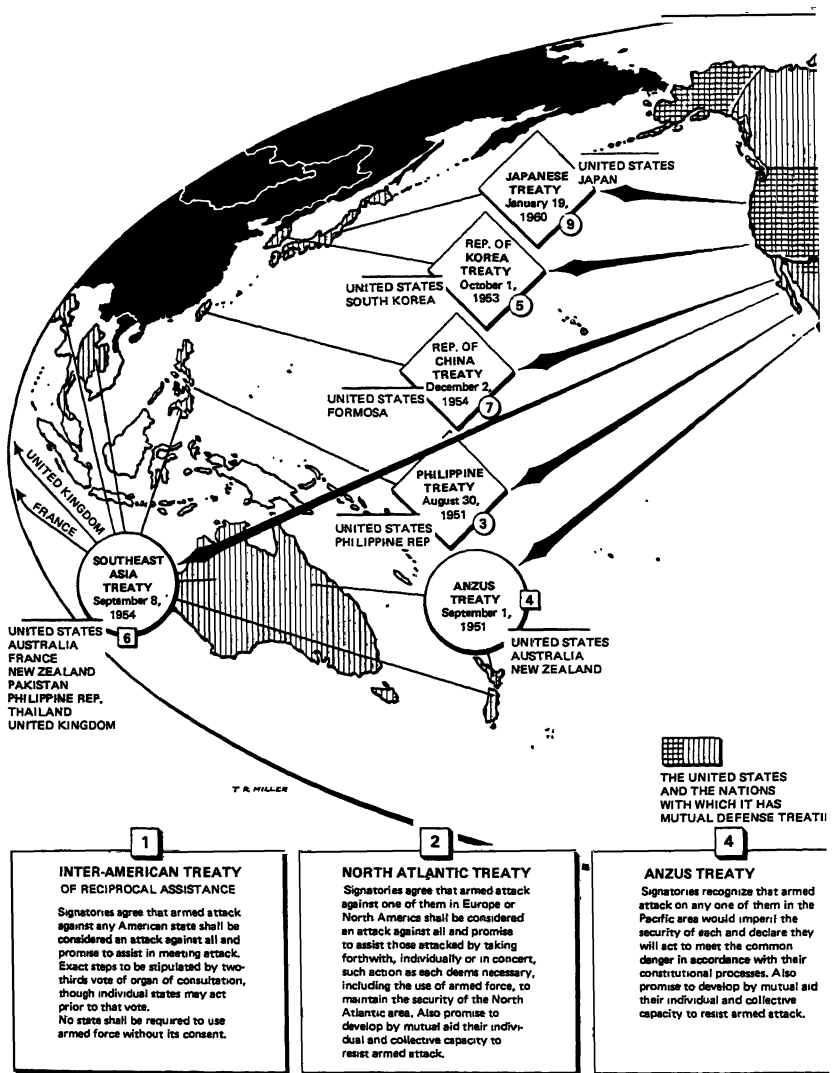
In the end, the President and the secretary did not endorse the proposal. They wanted a show of firmness, assuming that such a show would be the best way to avoid large-scale intervention and war with China. Yet, they were determined to avoid another Korea and to cut military spending and were somewhat skeptical that military force would be effective in this particular situation. The army Chief of Staff, General Matthew Ridgway, advised against the air strikes, suggesting that they would be difficult, costly, and a diversion. Air power would be insufficient, he argued; ground action by the United States would be required, and the nation did not have the necessary forces. In addition, American leaders were reluctant to provide such open support for French colonialism; they could not persuade the British to join them in an action to save the French empire, and did not want to go in alone. Furthermore, many prominent congressmen, including Senator Knowland, the Republican leader, and Democratic Senators John Kennedy and Hubert Humphrey—and public opinion—opposed military intervention.

The Communists, then, were able to make headway in one part of the world. Dien Bien Phu fell on May 7, and a settlement was reached at Geneva during the spring and early summer. The agreement gave Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam their independence. Vietnam was divided into two parts with the Communists controlling the North. The agreement called for elections, in July 1956, to establish a government for all of Vietnam. It prohibited the introduction of foreign troops, military personnel, and arms and ammunition into the area. The administration leaders refused to participate, in a substantial way, in the discussion or to sign the agreement and regarded the outcome as serious and undesirable.

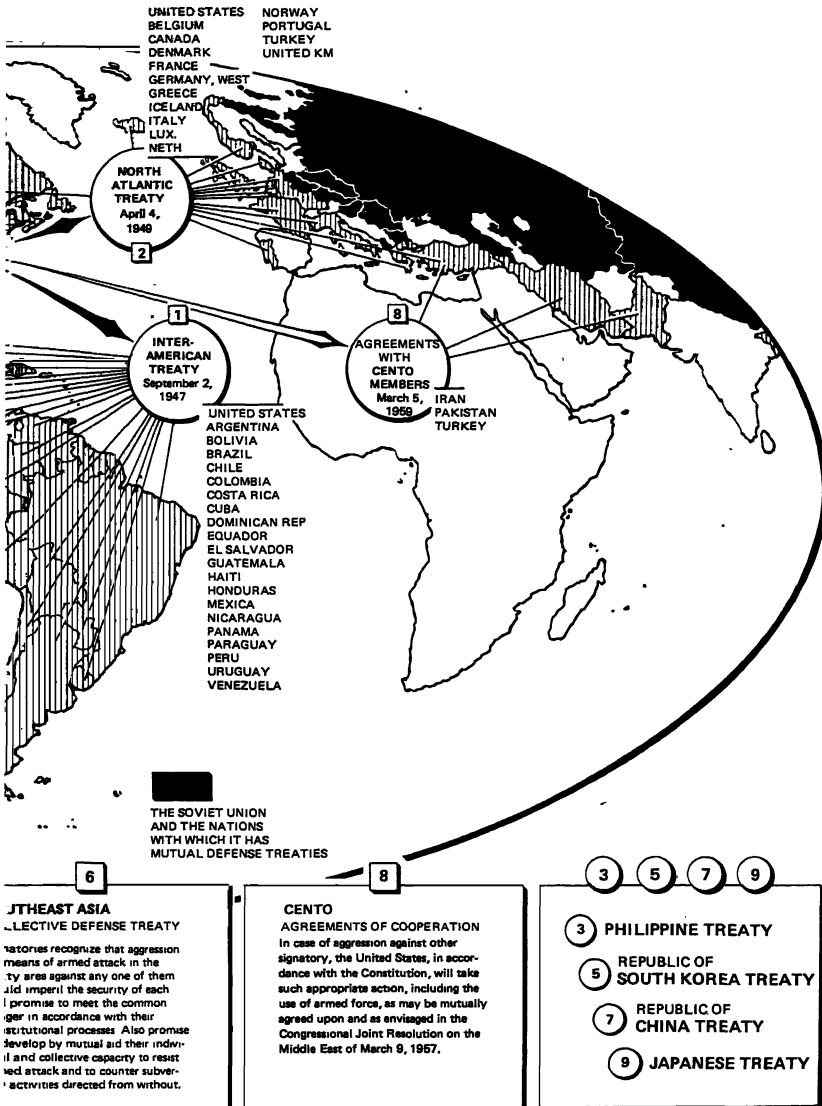
Now, just as the Truman administration had attempted to prevent Communism from moving beyond Eastern Europe, the Eisenhower administration sought to limit Communism in Southeast Asia to North Vietnam. The United States had an expert in anti-Communist activities in South Vietnam, Colonel Edward G. Lansdale, a military and advisory group, and the

CIA. Eisenhower sent General J. Lawton Collins to Saigon as his personal representative. In August, Washington decided to support anti-Communist nationalists in South Vietnam, and Eisenhower confirmed this, in October, in a letter to Ngo Dinh Diem, whom the administration decided to support. Diem was a Catholic, an anti-Communist, and a nationalist, with strong support in the United States from Cardinal Spellman of New York, the CIA, Senator Kennedy, Senator Mike Mansfield and others. Elected president in the South by 98 percent of the vote in 1955, Diem decided that Vietnam-wide elections must not be held in 1956. Washington agreed and supplied aid for military and economic development so that the South could fight off Communist efforts for total control. The administration was treating the Diem regime as a distinct government with a future. Eisenhower announced that the aim of American aid was "to assist Vietnam in developing and maintaining a strong, viable state, capable of resisting attempted subversion or aggression through military means." And Dulles argued that conditions were not yet right for elections. They could not be "really free." When the situation improved, there would be "no serious risk that the Communists would win," for they were incapable of winning a "free election." At that time, Vietnam would be unified "under free government auspices." At present, Ho dominated the more populous North, and, as a consequence of his large role in the defeat of the French, he had many supporters in the South. He seemed certain to win if an election was held in 1956.

These efforts in Vietnam were part of a larger program of containment in Southeast Asia. Immediately after the Indochina War, Dulles developed a Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) that linked together the United States, Great Britain, France, New Zealand, Australia, Thailand, and Pakistan in a defense pact. SEATO promised to protect Cambodia, Laos, and South Vietnam. American aid was designed to prevent further Communist expansion by any means—subversion and revolution as well as "open armed attack." While Dulles suggested that the United States would sympathize with "truly indigenous" revolutions, he insisted that the nation must oppose revolutions that were "dominated and engineered by communism." Recommending ratification of the treaty, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee recognized that the treaty committed "the United



Collective Defense Arrangements



States to a course of action over a vast expanse of the Pacific," but the senators believed that the risks were "consistent with our own highest interests." On February 1, 1955, the Senate, which the Democrats controlled, ratified, by a vote of 82 to 1, the treaty developed by the Republican Secretary of State.

SEATO resembled NATO in basic ways, and in 1955, Dulles tried to establish a similar system in the area between the two alliances. He encouraged Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan, Iran, and Great Britain to come together in the Baghdad Pact. Thus, by the mid-fifties a ring of treaty nations extended from Norway to Australia and Japan.

Clearly, the Eisenhower administration continued containment, as the China policy reveals. In 1954-1955, a Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Republic of China was developed and ratified; in it, Chiang promised not to attack the mainland without American approval. Thereafter, while the United States did not discourage the Nationalists from dreaming of a return to the mainland, and even encouraged it by continuing the nonrecognition policy begun by the Truman administration, it emphasized the defense of Formosa against Communist China rather than liberation.

The nation also continued to participate in NATO, the treaty organization that Truman and Acheson had established, and tried to strengthen it. Dulles successfully concluded the plans, developed by Acheson, to incorporate a rearmed West Germany into the organization. In other ways, however, the organization encountered difficulties. European countries were not eager to spend money on defense, and they began to clash over that issue, and others, with the United States.

The difficulties within the alliance can readily be seen in the conflict over Egypt. Following the British withdrawal from that country, Dulles attempted to influence Egypt with economic aid. While welcoming American aid, the Egyptians also courted the Russians, obtaining arms from them. This action persuaded Dulles to announce, in July 1956, that the United States was withdrawing its offer to help the Egyptians build a dam at Aswan, which Egypt needed in order to increase its supply of arable land and electric power. Then, Egypt decided to take total control of the Suez Canal and threatened Israel. The French, British, and Israelis intervened militarily, in an effort to seize control of the canal and shatter the Egyptian government.

The United States, cooperating with the Russians in the United Nations, denounced its allies for using force, and they, after gaining control of the canal, yielded to pressure and withdrew their forces.

But despite its weaknesses, NATO survived. Moreover, the Eisenhower administration supplemented it with other alliances. All were designed to accomplish the same objective: containment. The chief change produced by the administration was the enlargement of containment, rather than the substitution of liberation for it. By the mid-fifties, the global range of that policy was even more apparent than it had been when Truman left office.

Economic considerations continued to exert an influence on Washington's thinking about foreign affairs. Eisenhower believed that the Russians sought "the economic containment and gradual strangulation of America because the Communists both fear and respect our productive power." They would accomplish this by seizing control of the areas from which the United States imported critical materials and by denying the nation "those materials that we so badly need in order to sustain our economy and our kind of civilization. . . ." The American people, he maintained, "know the critical necessity of unimpaired access to raw materials on other continents for our own economic and military strength."

The Eisenhower administration also maintained the reliance on military power that had developed in the late Truman years: the Strategic Air Command with its A-bombs and H-bombs; and the whittled-down American army, which continued to serve in Western Europe and South Korea. Rather than station American divisions in most of the Asian countries with which the United States was now allied, the administration preferred to rely upon a "mobile striking force."

To compensate for the decline of the American army, Washington tried to develop the armies of its allies. While aid for economic development was cut to a low level in the early Eisenhower years, the military assistance program was enlarged. Several countries, in addition to South Vietnam, received financial assistance and military advisers to help them develop their military establishments. The list included Pakistan, Iraq, Iran, Turkey, Thailand, the Philippines, and Taiwan. The administration believed that these countries must develop military power

in order to contain Communism. Moreover, they must be chiefly responsible for any ground action that became necessary, such as resisting aggression by minor powers. Significantly, the administration assumed that expenditures for the armies of its allies were more economical than expenditures for the American army.

Washington placed a low value on the power of nationalism as a means of resisting Communism. It did not, however, completely ignore nonmilitary factors. For example, it advised Diem to make reforms that would strengthen his regime. On the other hand, the administration assumed that containment depended chiefly upon American power, military strength, and alliances, and it rejected suggestions that the United States should aid the economic development of countries, such as India and Indonesia, that refused to join an alliance. The administration was confident that the United States could develop effective ties with non-Western nations. In recognition of their need for American help, these nations would join with the United States in a system of collective security so that the flow of Communism would be halted.

By the beginning of Eisenhower's second term in 1957, containment was more firmly in place than ever before. It had triumphed over both Henry Wallace and John Foster Dulles; and it had overcome the shock of the Communist triumph in China, the success of the Russian atomic program, and the Korean War. It now had few critics of political significance.

Containment had also triumphed over the challenge from Senator McCarthy. His influence largely disappeared as the administration made containment its policy. After all, McCarthy was a champion of change, at least certain types of change, profoundly dissatisfied with major features of American policy, especially the foreign policy of the Truman administration, while the Eisenhower administration was an administration of continuity.

McCarthy's decline did not start at the beginning of the Eisenhower administration. Indeed, his influence continued to rise for some months after January 1953. Eisenhower, in fact, helped McCarthy win reelection. In 1952, the general had mixed feelings about the Wisconsin senator, assuming that there was some validity to his charges but regarding his methods as objectionable. Ike accepted a platform that included McCarthy's themes of "traitors" in government under Democratic admin-



istrations and Republican determination to root them out; and he used such themes in the campaign. Moreover, he associated himself with McCarthy and his allies during the campaign, even though they opposed the containment policy and had harshly condemned Eisenhower's benefactor, Marshall. The presidential candidate allowed himself to be embraced by Jenner in Indianapolis and deleted a tribute to Marshall from a speech in Milwaukee, doing so because of advice that he must not antagonize the senator's supporters. McCarthy, in turn, rode on Eisenhower's campaign train through Wisconsin, introduced the general in Appleton, the senator's hometown, and campaigned for Eisenhower's election. After the inauguration, McCarthy professed loyalty to the new President.

Dulles also attempted to cooperate with McCarthy. Determined to avoid Acheson's troubles, he called upon State Department employees to prove their loyalty. He forced a veteran foreign service officer, John Carter Vincent, to retire as a punishment for his role in the "loss" of China, and he encouraged one of the architects of containment, Kennan, to retire. The secretary appointed Scott McLeod as the department's security officer. A former FBI man with close ties with the McCarthy wing of the party, McLeod carried out his responsibilities in a zealous fashion and announced in November 1953 that he had forced out nearly 500 employees for security reasons.

Eisenhower continued his efforts to get along with McCarthy and other representatives of his faction of the party. The President supplied them with their share of patronage, failed to support one of his aides, Harold Stassen, when he clashed with the Wisconsin senator, and tolerated the summary dismissal of government officials accused of being security risks. Eisenhower also allowed his top advisors, including Vice-President Nixon, to repeat the charges of Communist influence in the Democratic administration.

But the President's performance did not prevent McCarthy from attacking the new administration. McCarthy's own victory and the defeat of one of his foes, Senator Benton, added to his reputation as a man of great political effectiveness, even though he ran behind Eisenhower and other Republicans in Wisconsin. And with the Republicans in control of the Senate, he obtained a chairmanship for the first time, taking charge of the Government Operations Committee. He brushed aside Eisenhower's

suggestion that the administration could and should now handle the Communist-in-government issue. McCarthy was encouraged by his apparent popularity and clout, and his devoted allies: Jenner, the chairman of the Internal Security Subcommittee; Harold Velde, the chairman of HUAC; and Senators Barry Goldwater of Arizona and Everett Dirksen of Illinois, two foes of "Eastern domination" of the GOP.

McCarthy moved on a number of fronts, all of them troublesome to the administration. Enlarging his committee's powers of investigation, he sought to expose Communists who still lurked in the federal bureaucracy, selecting the State Department's Voice of America as one of his targets. He then joined in the unsuccessful attack upon the nomination of Charles Bohlen as Ambassador to Russia. Bohlen, a career Foreign Service officer who had been present at major wartime conferences, refused to repudiate the Yalta Agreements or credit them for Russian control of Eastern Europe. As a result, he was attacked for his association with the Roosevelt-Truman foreign policy, a tie that raised doubts about his "loyalty." McCarthy further attacked the State Department, claiming that he had worked out an agreement with Greek shipowners not to carry goods to Communist ports, something, he charged, that the State Department was incapable of doing. He also sent two investigators—Roy Cohn and G. David Schine—to Europe to investigate America's overseas information activities. He drew upon their findings to criticize the libraries for holding "Communist books," and persuaded the State Department to ban such books from the libraries. He threatened an investigation of the CIA because Acheson's son-in-law, William Bundy, worked there. He attacked the army for "coddling Communists," charging that it protected and even promoted subversives. In addition, he even began to criticize Eisenhower and the people around him, except the Vice-President, charging that the administration was not doing enough to fight Communists and it was not tough enough with its allies. He announced that Communism in government would still be an issue in the 1954 campaign.

Despite provocation, Eisenhower hesitated to move against McCarthy. The President shared the widely held views about the senator's strength and also believed that his criticisms of the Democrats had some basis in fact. In addition, Eisenhower

feared alienating the Republican right wing. He hoped to promote party unity at a time when the Senate was dominated by politicians who had opposed his nomination. His distaste for political combat and clashes of personalities, and his reluctance to pressure Congress, also restrained him as his anger mounted. "I will not get into the gutter with that guy," he declared. He consoled himself with thoughts that an attack might strengthen McCarthy and that he would go too far and destroy himself.

Nevertheless, Eisenhower felt compelled to act on several occasions. He grew increasingly distressed by McCarthy's techniques. He considered them unfair, for they often damaged innocent people, and harmful to American foreign relations. He defended Bohlen, criticized "book burning," and repudiated attacks on Protestant clergymen by Velde and a McCarthy aide. He also resisted McCarthy's threat to investigate the CIA, and criticized him for endangering allied unity.

The President, however, resisted pressure to move more forcefully against McCarthy. He refused to criticize him on overseas libraries. He also rejected Bohlen's appeal for dismissal of McLeod, altered the loyalty program so that it would be easier to remove people from government jobs, and rejected the appeals for clemency from Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, two people convicted as atomic spies who insisted they were innocent.

In an effort to gain McCarthy's cooperation, Eisenhower relied heavily on Nixon, who fearing the impact on the party of an Eisenhower-McCarthy split, tried to persuade McCarthy to cooperate with the administration and focus his attack on the Truman administration. Eisenhower also sought to demonstrate that his administration was strongly opposed to Communism. He allowed Brownell to criticize the Truman administration for the appointment of subversives and encouraged him to draft new anti-Communist legislation. But all these efforts failed to improve relations between the administration and the senator.

By late February 1954, Eisenhower felt compelled to counter-attack. The senator had become a threat to institutions and policies that the President believed in, including the army. The President's move followed McCarthy's humiliation of the secretary of the army. Eisenhower provided some support to Stevens, defended Senator Ralph Flanders, a Republican from Vermont, when he criticized his colleague from Wisconsin on the

Senate floor, and encouraged Nixon to make a veiled attack upon McCarthy. But these actions only encouraged the senator to stretch his definition of the period of treason. Previously, he spoke of "20 years of treason." Now, he spoke of 21.

Aside from these actions, the President made few contributions to the campaign against McCarthy. Eisenhower stood aloof while the army-McCarthy hearings seriously damaged McCarthy's prestige. And when pressure to censure him mounted in the Senate, the President merely praised the procedures of the committee and said nothing about the conclusion. When the hearings were completed, the President criticized those Republican senators who voted against the censure resolution.

But Eisenhower was not a major force propelling the downward course of McCarthy's fortunes. The senator reached his peak early in 1954 and declined thereafter, mainly because he threatened too many things and was no longer useful. He had become a threat to the Senate, the army, the Eisenhower administration, and American foreign policy. He now seemed useful only to those who were extremely dissatisfied with established policies. At the beginning of 1954, 50 percent of the people had a favorable opinion of him and only 29 percent disliked him, but by August, the percentages had shifted to 36 favorable and 51 unfavorable. In the same period, newspaper criticism mounted rapidly. Developments in foreign affairs, such as the conclusion of the frustrating Korean War, contributed to his decline. Finally, a new industry, television, was a major factor in his fall; the televised army-McCarthy hearings, in the spring, provided millions with an opportunity to see the barbarism of the senator that had earlier produced only a handful of critics.

The changing political scene also played a role in McCarthy's decline. When he threatened a Democratic administration, he helped Republicans gain power. But now he was a danger to a Republican administration and seemed to threaten Republican chances for victory in November. Thus, while his strongest backers, the conservative Republicans, stuck with him, many Republicans turned away. The party did not want him to participate as he had in the congressional elections of 1950 and 1952. The elections damaged him still more—they strengthened the liberal contingent in the Senate, gave control to the Democrats, and took away his chairmanship.

In this situation, the Senate censured the Wisconsin senator. For some time, his liberal critics, such as Senator Herbert Lehman of New York, had called for some formal action against him, and they were helped by the National Committee for an Effective Congress, which supplied evidence and analyses demonstrating that McCarthy had not been responsible for the defeat of Tydings and Benton and thus should not be regarded as invincible. In June 1954, a moderate Republican, Ralph Flanders of Vermont, introduced an anti-McCarthy resolution. J. William Fulbright of Arkansas and Arthur Watkins of Utah, a Democrat and a Republican, joined Flanders in this effort. They were supported by conservative Democrats who were troubled by McCarthy's contempt for the rules and customs of the Senate. In addition, Democrats on his committee criticized his management of it, and, with some Republican support, they were able to restrict his activities. On December 2, the Senate voted. All Democrats present, one independent, and half of the Republicans voted for censure; only twenty-two Republicans opposed.

The vote did not mean, however, that most of the senators repudiated McCarthy's thesis about Communism in American life. They had not voted on that question but on the narrow and nonideological issue of Senate custom and tradition. Trying to lead a divided party, Lyndon Johnson, the Democratic leader, worked to limit the issue. He obtained a unanimous Democratic vote on a resolution that censured McCarthy for conduct unbecoming a senator, behavior that reflected on all senators. The Senate took a stand on McCarthy's behavior, not on his basic ideas, and most senators declared that they would no longer tolerate such behavior.

McCarthy continued to attack but without the impact he once had enjoyed. He criticized the President for weakness toward Communist China and refusal to fight the Communists vigorously. He attacked some members of the administration, including the President's brother, Milton, as extremely dangerous men. He apologized for supporting Eisenhower in 1952. He charged that "traitors" had high posts in the State and Defense Departments. He promised to run for reelection on the issue "Get the US out of the UN and the UN out of the US." And he charged that Eisenhower's atoms for peace proposal was an "Atoms for War" proposal, suggesting it would be easier "just to

send a shipload of atomic bombs to the Communist empire." McCarthy's admirers praised him, criticized Eisenhower, and talked of a new party, but, ignored by most of the Senate, the press, and the White House, the senator deteriorated emotionally and physically. He died on May 2, 1957, a victim of hepatitis aggravated by heavy drinking. His passing shocked those who hoped he would lead the revolt against Eisenhower's leadership.

But McCarthy's decline did not mean that the fears of Communism had evaporated. In fact, while the decline was taking place, Congress passed new anti-Communist legislation, the Communist Control Act of 1954. It amended the legislation of 1950 and required "Communist infiltrated" groups to register with the attorney general. Liberals, led by Senator Hubert Humphrey, added a provision declaring that the Communist party was the agent of a hostile power and thus not entitled to the rights, privileges, and immunities of legal bodies. Most congressmen still seemed to regard the party as a threat that must be suppressed. While the number of congressional investigations of Communism began to decline in 1955, after rising rapidly and steadily for a decade, the number remained high, as HUAC and other committees continued to function.

McCarthy's decline ended a major threat to containment. Regarding it as an ineffective way of combatting Communism, he portrayed containment as soft and a product of Communist influence. He lashed out at the State Department, the army, and the nation's allies, all of whom were important participants in the development and implementation of the policy. Well before his death, however, he had ceased to be an influential critic of containment.

By 1957, containment occupied a secure position, for it had survived major challenges to it in the United States. The nation still functioned as a global power. The global role as defined by the Truman administration still pertained: the United States had substantial responsibilities and power but only within limits. The nation must be active in international affairs, but it should not expect to accomplish all that it might desire. This approach to foreign affairs had survived a series of challenges to become *the* American way of participating in the cold war.

## **PART III**

### **A DECADE OF RISING CONFIDENCE**

By 1957, a major issue had been settled. It seemed clear not only that the United States was to continue to play a large role in the world, but that it would continue on the course charted by the Truman administration. With that matter resolved, the nation was, in a sense, free to turn to other problems.

The next decade was dominated by rising confidence. The nation tried to conduct the containment policy more effectively and became increasingly convinced that it could do so on a global scale. Americans also became more confident that, at the same time, they could attack and solve their domestic problems.

## Chapter 7

### The Economic Boom

The performance of the American economy contributed significantly to the growth of American self-confidence. Prosperity came with the war and continued through the Truman years; it remained a major feature of American life during the 1950s and 1960s. In fact, economic growth accelerated during the latter decade, and more Americans became affluent than ever before. The nation did not become an economic utopia. Three recessions marred the performance during the 1950s, and old problems survived, including poverty. But economic growth reduced the amount of poverty substantially. The system responsible for the performance continued to be the collectivist type of capitalism that had developed during the Depression and World War II, but now each component grew larger, relations among them became more harmonious, and the system became more active outside the United States.

The federal government was one of the dynamic parts of the economic system. After expanding during the Korean War and declining slowly right after it, it grew slowly in the second half of the 1950s and rapidly during the 1960s. Federal expenditures nearly doubled during that decade, jumping from less than \$100 billion per year to more than \$180 billion.

Defense spending was responsible for many of the economic developments. In the years from 1946 to 1960, it never consumed less than 4.5 percent of the gross national product,



reached 13.5 percent, and averaged 9 percent. During the 1960s, expenditures on defense and war grew by more than 75 percent, consumed nearly three-fifths of the budget, and accounted for nearly 10 percent of the gross national product. The nation's largest employer, the Defense Department employed more than 4.5 million people at its peak. Millions more worked for firms that depended heavily on military spending. More than 5,000 cities and towns had at least one firm doing business with the department. In 1966, the closely related National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) estimated that more than 2 million people were "dependent upon the space program for their source of livelihood and standard of living" and concluded that the program, which cost \$5 billion a year, had become "a powerful influence upon the economy of the United States." It provided "jobs, new technology, and new knowledge."

Spending on defense, war, and space exploration was not Washington's only economically significant activity. The federal government remained active in transportation, regulating and promoting the development of the transportation network. Its promotional efforts included the construction of roads and airports. It continued to regulate various economic activities, such as the stock market, radio and television, petroleum and natural gas, and the food and drug industries. It enlarged its regulatory efforts, adding, for example, a requirement that cigarette manufacturers must warn of the dangers of smoking.

The regulators tended to be promotional rather than critical in their relations with the regulated. The government used tax laws in various ways to encourage economic activities, including the exploration for oil. It promoted overseas expansion by battling against trade barriers; employing foreign aid, tax benefits, and diplomacy; guaranteeing investments; and enjoying great success in its efforts to penetrate the oil fields of the Middle East. Other federal programs guaranteed home loans; supported farm prices; supplied pensions, unemployment insurance, other welfare payments; and developed slum clearance and housing projects.

Washington also tried to control inflation, worrying more about that than about the slowing of the growth rate during the 1950s. It worked to guarantee that the nation would never experience another depression, and, during the 1960s, became especially interested in accelerating economic growth.

The federal promotion of education also had enormous effects on the economy. While state and local governments participated, the federal government was a major factor in this growth. After World War II and again after the Korean War, it offered a GI Bill of Rights that paid the veteran's educational bills. Federal educational programs were also developed in response to competition from the Soviet Union. Many Americans were persuaded that education was important for national as well as individual progress, and new, large-scale programs of federal aid to education were established in the 1960s.

Federal spending on research and development, which jumped from \$9 billion in fiscal 1961 to \$16 billion five years later, became greater than total federal spending before World War II. Washington supplied 70 percent of the funds spent for research and development during the 1960s, and almost all of the money—90 percent—came from the Department of Defense, the Atomic Energy Commission, and NASA. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare supplied only 5 percent. As a result, a high percentage of the nation's scientists and engineers—groups that were in great demand during most of the 1960s—worked on defense and space programs.

The industrialization of the South and West also illustrated government's role in the economy. Stimulated by the war, the industrialization of these regions continued to move forward at a rapid pace. Private forces were a factor, for the development resulted partly from the tendency of the corporate giants to decentralize their operations. But public contributions were even more significant. State and local governments helped by increasing their investments in social overhead—such as schools, airports, and roads, and the federal government spent most of its defense money in these regions. Texas, for example, which was in eleventh place in war contracts during World War II, moved to third by 1960. California moved from third to first and had 24 percent of those contracts. At least 20 percent of the manufacturing employment in California, Washington, Kansas, and several other states was paid for by these federal programs, and the percentage was much higher in Los Angeles, San Diego, Wichita, and Seattle. California maintained its top position as a defense contractor during the 1960s, and Texas continued to climb, moving from third to second.

With government growing rapidly, business became more

heavily dependent on it. The links between government and business were most obvious in the defense and space programs. More than 20,000 firms had prime contracts in 1967-1968, while 100,000 more had subcontracts. Many of the top contractors—the aircraft, ship building, missile, and electronics firms—now depended upon government for more than half of their sales. An established manufacturing firm, General Motors, sold only 2 percent of its output, from 1961 to 1967, to the Department of Defense and related agencies. But a newer company, McDonnell-Douglas, found 75 percent of its market in these agencies. Lockheed sold 88 percent of its products to the government. In fact, firms such as McDonnell and Lockheed have spent most of their lives selling to Washington.

In addition, the defense industries maintained and enlarged their ties with the military. Their close working relations were symbolized and held together by the recruitment of high-ranking, retired military officers for important industrial positions. In 1959, the top one hundred contractors employed eight retired officers per company. A decade later, the average had jumped to twenty-two.

Although the federal government played a major role in the economy, it did not have a monopoly on economic power. American leaders did not believe that the federal government should take on all economic activities. Government, even in the Kennedy-Johnson years, had an inferiority complex. It believed in the superiority of the business system. Similarly, almost all Americans believed in what they called “private” or “free” enterprise. Thus, rather than construct government corporations or nationalize basic industries, Washington negotiated contracts with private firms to obtain supplies and services. “Instead of a free enterprise system,” one observer suggested, “we are moving toward a government-subsidized private-profit system.”

Washington shared its economic power with private organizations, of which the giant corporations were the most powerful. Although more business firms existed than ever before and most were small, it was the giant corporations that controlled most of the economic activity; and they grew rapidly in the prosperous environment. Of the one hundred largest firms, twenty-two had assets of \$1 billion or more in 1950, ten years later, fifty did. In the 1960s, a merger movement gained strength, as it had at the turn of the century and again in the 1920s. There were at least

1,200 mergers per year; in 1965, the number moved above 2,000; then, in 1967, it jumped to nearly 3,000, and to well above 4,000 the following year.

Government as well as business leaders facilitated and promoted the growth of big business. From time to time, Washington used its antitrust powers and helped small firms, but it relied heavily on the large firms, especially for defense and war and in efforts to enlarge the American presence in other parts of the world. As in the past, almost all of the defense business went to a small number of big firms. In 1964, 20 percent of the money spent on defense manufacturing went to four companies, and five received 60 percent of the Defense Department's research and development awards. In 1967, one hundred companies received more than 65 percent of the prime contracts. Six companies—General Dynamics, McDonnell-Douglas, Boeing, General Electric, North-American Rockwell, and United Aircraft—received more than \$5 billion each in prime contracts from 1961 to 1967. Lockheed received more than \$10 billion.

Many of the mergers took a new form, called the conglomerate. By the late 1940s, less than 40 percent of the mergers fell into this category, but by the end of the 1960s conglomerates accounted for more than 90 percent of the mergers. This type of merger brought together firms in different industries. Diversification and the spreading of risks were goals, and power in more than one industry was often the result.

Old giants, like General Motors, continued to grow even larger. The leader in a booming industry that reached a new high in sales in 1968, GM by the mid-sixties had 735,000 employees, 1.3 million shareholders, plants in 24 countries and a product list that ranged far beyond automobiles to include refrigerators, earth-moving equipment, locomotives, jet engines, and missile guidance systems. The firm's profits were greater than the general revenue of 48 states, and its sales exceeded the revenue of all state governments and all but 17 nations.

Most important, the giant corporations had become "multinational," as well as diversified. Almost all of them not only shipped goods abroad, they also established plants and offices and produced goods and services in other countries. American business, assisted by government programs such as foreign aid, were active exporters, but investments abroad, again assisted by government, had become even more important. In 1966, the

United States exported \$43 billion dollars in goods and services, but American-owned businesses abroad produced \$110 billion in goods and services.

Although the multinational corporation appeared before World War II, it mushroomed after the war. American investment in American-owned firms outside the United States (direct investment) increased from \$7 billion, in 1940, to more than \$70 billion, in 1969. More than two-fifths of the money was invested in manufacturing; nearly one-third was in petroleum, and nearly one-tenth was in mining and smelting. Standard Oil of New Jersey, one of the early multinational firms, had better than half of its investments overseas, while a more recent arrival, General Motors, produced 20 percent of its car output outside North America. With funds available for investment, such firms found rich opportunities for profit in the booming and developing countries beyond American boundaries. The establishment of a factory in a foreign country enabled an American corporation to get behind a tariff wall and reach a market that otherwise would have been closed to it.

The multinational corporation represented the global range of American life. American firms had direct investments in nearly every part of the world. Most of the money, more than 60 percent, was invested in Canada and Europe. But over 15 percent was in Latin America and more than 20 percent was in other parts of the "third world" and in Japan. Clearly, the American presence abroad was not limited to American diplomats and soldiers.

In the business world, the men of great power were the managers of the corporate giants. Most managers owned substantial blocks of stock and, thus, were linked by economic bonds to owners outside the managerial ranks. But managerial power rested upon work, luck, and talent, not stock ownership. Stock ownership was a consequence of—a reward for—managerial service. An individual rose to power in the corporate world as a consequence of his education, his skill, and his ability to work with other people within an organization. He moved up a bureaucratic ladder. And a substantial number of men at the top had begun life in the lower middle class. They had not inherited or purchased their power.

The new managers paid more attention to human relations within the organization, improving their employee relations

programs and seeking ways of stimulating a will to work. Concerned about the corporate "image," they developed more sophisticated public relations programs, emphasizing the social value of the corporation, and they provided financial support for education and welfare. Advertising budgets were also enlarged; advertising campaigns were waged to shape demand, and the corporation effectively exploited the new, persuasive means of communication, television.

Business relations with the public, government, and labor, although not perfectly harmonious, were much better than they had been during the 1930s. The presence of many corporation executives and corporation lawyers in top spots in Washington, during Democratic administrations as well as during the Eisenhower years, symbolized the prestige as well as the power of the business system.

Although American business strengthened itself both at home and abroad, it did not become all-powerful, even inside the United States. Big business was not a solid power bloc. While many firms saw the military establishment as a profitable market others considered it a tax burden and a source of inflation. The defense contractors themselves battled with one another. (One of the most highly publicized fights pitted General Dynamics, a Texas-based firm, against Boeing, of Seattle, over the TFX fighter-bomber.) Furthermore, the government did not always respond to business demands. It passed some liberal legislation that many of them opposed, and even criticized some features of the merger movement.

American business also had to contend with a large labor movement that shared in the economic power. While the labor movement continued to grow, its days of spectacular growth were behind it. The unions added slightly more than 5 million members from 1945 to 1960, but most of this increase, 3.2 million, came during the Korean War. The unions added only one-half million members from 1953 to 1960 and actually experienced a drop relative to the size of the labor force during those years. In 1953, 28 percent of the labor force was organized while only 26.2 percent was in 1960. This was but a short distance above the 24.8 percent of 1945.

Several factors explained the slowness of labor's growth in the post-Korean period. One was the sluggish rate of economic growth. New jobs were not being created in the areas, especially

manufacturing, in which labor was most active. In addition, automation, which was moving forward rapidly, hurt labor by destroying jobs in well-organized industries, such as automobiles and coal mining. Furthermore, the unions themselves made little effort to organize the unorganized, such as white-collar workers, women, and blacks. The employment of women continued to increase. The white-collar segment of the work force, which included school teachers and government employees, grew at a rapid pace. And blacks continued to move out of the rural South. Thus, the unions ignored some of their best opportunities for growth.

Although growth was slow, labor sought to strengthen itself in various ways. The unions stepped up their political activities, purged Communists and corrupt officials from their ranks, and expanded their research and educational programs. And in 1955, the two giants of the labor movement, the AFL and the CIO, merged to form one federation that represented all but 3 million of the organized workers.

Despite these efforts, the movement showed several signs of weakness in the 1950s. It failed to obtain repeal of Taft-Hartley; and it failed to prevent passage of the Landrum-Griffin Act of 1959, a measure that increased federal regulation of unions and labor leaders. In addition, during the Eisenhower period, union officials were unable to secure adoption of most of their anti-recession, tax, and welfare proposals. On the state level, while enjoying some success with social welfare proposals, the movement failed to block passage of antiunion right-to-work laws in eighteen states.

During the decade, labor enjoyed greater success in the economic arena. Collective bargaining was well established by the end of World War II, and the unions employed this method to achieve higher wages and fringe benefits. Thus, workers acquired more leisure time and greater protection in times of ill health and in old age. In these areas, the movement achieved many victories.

Labor made greater progress, however, during the 1960s, although it encountered several obstacles: the rapid growth in white-collar labor, the shift of industry out of unionized areas, the decline of industries in which unions were strong, the advance of job-destroying automation in unionized industries, and antiunion activities by managers. The post-Korean decline

in the movement's share of the work force continued through the first half of the decade, but it did regain some of the lost ground in the second half of the decade, although it did not return to its 1953 percentage. Because of increased efforts in two rapidly expanding segments of the labor force—the white-collar and the black workers—union membership moved well above the 18 million mark. By now, there were more white-collar than blue-collar workers; many of them, especially teachers, government employees, and retail clerks, had a new sense of the need for organization, and many labor leaders recognized their need for these workers. By the end of the decade, nearly 16 percent of the union members were white-collar workers. As for blacks, while some unions, such as the building trades, continued to discriminate against them, many labor leaders both supported the civil rights movement and worked against discrimination in their organizations. Thus, the black membership increased and constituted about 15 percent of organized labor by the late 1960s.

While organized labor was basically pro-capitalist, it, nevertheless, battled with businessmen over the distribution of the system's benefits. Backed by a willingness to strike, it continued to achieve a high degree of success in collective bargaining, seeking wage settlements that would take advantage of high profit levels and protect workers against rising prices. Unions also sought guaranteed annual incomes, longer vacations with pay, and the improvement of pension programs. And, although it continued to suffer defeats in legislative battles, such as the struggle over right-to-work laws, the movement was more successful politically than it had been in the 1950s. It was, for example, a major champion of the successful social welfare proposals.

By the 1960s, the American labor movement was a widely accepted part of American life. It was also a participant in the worldwide activities of the United States. Most corporate executives had learned to live with unions; most labor leaders did not feel compelled to resort to the strike as often as they had earlier. The movement did not enjoy great prestige. Many Americans regarded it as corrupt, undemocratic, and too powerful, but there was no significant inclination to destroy it. Quite secure at home, union leaders tried to help workers in other countries develop non-Communist labor movements based on the American model.



Thus, three major groups—government, business, and labor—shared power. Economic power was divided. It was divided among these groups, and there were divisions within each of them. A unified, coordinated power bloc did not control the economy.

There were, however, elements that linked the groups, creating a significant degree of harmony. Certainly, labor-management conflict was at a relatively low level. Strikes and violence were much less frequent than in the past; peaceful collective bargaining and the long-term contract were more common. Labor and management reached agreements rather easily in a situation that permitted management to pass higher labor costs on to the consumer in the form of higher prices. The labor movement purged its most radical members and made other efforts to demonstrate that it was a “respectable” member of the community. As to its relationship with the federal government, labor provided strong support for the anti-Communist foreign policy.

The links between big government and big business were obvious and important. Although they continued to criticize each other, they recognized their dependence on one another. If government regulated business, the regulatory agencies often had a positive, friendly, and helpful attitude toward the industries they regulated. If government maintained an antitrust program, it also made contributions to the growth of big business. The defense contract was a major link between government and business; the shifting of personnel between the two sectors was another.

Both business and labor assumed that the federal government should be active in economic affairs; all other significant groups agreed. Debates took place, but they were over the type, the amount, and the timing of federal action, even though the rhetoric often suggested that more was at stake. Most, if not all, business leaders still assumed that businessmen were superior to politicians and that running a business was the most important task in the country, but they found much to applaud in government's economic operations.

The economic system did not function perfectly. But, measured in terms of the dominant values of the period, the system functioned more successfully than ever before and more successfully than any other economic system. It did produce recessions in 1949–1950, 1953–1954, 1957–1958, and 1960–1961. But while

growth was slow in the second half of the 1950s, a depression was avoided. Unemployment was never one-third of what it had been in 1932-1933, and never more than one-half of what it had been at the end of the 1930s. Furthermore, in the 1960s, a new growth record was set.

Economic conditions in the 1950s differed greatly from the postwar depression that many had envisioned. Real per capita consumption, measured in 1960 dollars, moved from \$1,350 in 1945 to \$1,824 in 1960. Unemployment, which averaged less than 5 percent of the work force, was lower than it had been in the 1920s. Almost all wage earners had greater security than ever before. Their real take-home earnings increased 16 percent during the period. Many obtained new contracts, tying wages to cost of living and providing fringe benefits such as pensions and vacations with pay. Wage-earning families sharply increased their purchases of consumer goods and there was a dramatic increase in home ownership. Many people moved into the middle class, defined as a family income of \$6,000 to \$14,999 in 1960, as that segment of American society grew from less than one-third of the population in 1947 to nearly one-half in 1960. The proportion of the population above the middle class also grew in this period, moving from 4 percent to 7.

The economy performed in even more spectacular fashion in the 1960s. The old national record for economic growth had been established in World War II, when the economy had expanded for eighty consecutive months. Now it grew for eight and one-half years, beginning early in 1961 and continuing well into 1969. In the process, the gross national product expanded from slightly above \$500 billion to more than \$930 billion. Several factors, including government fiscal policy (the annual increases in spending and a major tax cut in 1964), the unusually high family incomes, and the growth of the population, produced this impressive performance. Employment moved to about 78 million. Unemployment, which averaged 6.7 percent in 1961, dropped to 5.6 percent in 1963, and then to 3.3 percent at the end of 1968.

Several industries grew at especially impressive rates. Despite a sharp drop in its labor force, agriculture increased its output enormously. In 1939, 31 million people lived on farms; by 1963, fewer than 14 million remained there. Yet farm production was greater than ever before. While one farm worker had been able

to supply less than eleven people in 1940, he could serve the needs of more than twenty-seven in 1961. A substantial increase in the size of farms and greater use of science and technology explain this change. The tractor had become commonplace, and farmers even put the airplane into service on the farm. They also used more fertilizer and insecticides, better crop strains, better feeds, and new methods of breeding.

The construction industry also boomed. Americans built office buildings, factories, stores, homes, schools, churches, roads, bridges, and other structures at a rapid pace. Home construction enjoyed an upsurge for the first time since the 1920s. Two government agencies, in particular, were responsible for this growth—the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Veterans Administration (VA). By insuring home loans, they changed the system of financing home construction, thereby extending the term of mortgages and enlarging substantially the possibilities for home ownership. Critics complained of shoddy craftsmanship, monotonous architecture, and lack of trees in many of the suburban housing developments encouraged by the FHA and the VA, but other commentators doubted that the conditions were inferior to those many suburban immigrants had known in the central cities.

Electricity and the industries associated with it, such as manufacturers of home appliances, grew rapidly. With little domestic help other than the babysitter available, the suburban mother and housewife depended heavily on her labor-saving household appliances. They helped her place a high value on life in the home.

A new industry, television, developed at a spectacular pace. Its introduction had been delayed by World War II, and only 172,000 families owned sets as late as 1948. By 1950, however, the number of families with sets had jumped to 5 million, and ownership increased by 5 million per year during the 1950s. By the 1960s, 90 percent of the homes were supplied with TVs. On the other hand, the movie and newspaper industries declined, and the radio industry was dramatically changed as a consequence of this new medium.

In order to serve the new way of life and the new transportation system, the chemical industry turned out detergents, plastics, synthetic rubber, and other products in tremendous numbers. The aircraft industry and its successor, the aerospace



*Home Construction: A Central Figure in the Boom (UPI)*

industry, also expanded, in part because of the growth of the military system and the space program, but also because of the development of the commercial airline industry. That industry, aided by technical developments, especially the introduction of the jet engine, became the nation's number one commercial carrier of passengers by the late 1950s. The automobile industry, which was operating above the 1929 level by the beginning of the 1950s, became an important part of the boom of the 1950s and 1960s and a major factor in suburban life. The industry produced the chief means of passenger travel; buses and trucks, and airlines, grew in importance, at the expense of the railroads. In turn, these industries stimulated the development of the petroleum and natural gas industries, while the coal industry became less significant in both transportation and heating.

The economic boom accompanied and facilitated many other developments in American life, including a population explosion. The nation grew from less than 149 million people in 1945 to nearly 195 million by 1965, with immigration no longer an important feature of American life. This growth resulted, in part, from a "baby boom" that had begun during World War II, reversing a downward trend in the birthrate. Suddenly during

the 1940s, Americans developed a greater interest in producing and raising children. The marrying age dropped, the birth rate jumped, and the average American family grew larger, chiefly because the middle-class family increased. The middle-class suburban home became a child-centered home. Ignorance did not explain the baby boom, for it occurred among that segment of the population, the middle class, that was well informed about birth control. Although the economic boom contributed by encouraging people to believe they could afford larger families, it only partially explains the phenomenon. The baby boom ended in the late 1950s, the economic boom continued. The baby boom may have been a reaction to particular features of the period, including the pressures that military service placed on people. This boom seemed to reflect a reaffirmation of family and private life in a period when they were under attack from certain forces. Growing interest in other forms of satisfaction, such as careers for women, and rising concern about overpopulation brought the boom to an end. In 1957, 123 babies were born for each 1,000 women between the ages of 15 and 44, but the number dropped below 86 by 1968. The population continued to grow, however, for the "population explosion" resulted from an increase in the length of life as well as an increase in the birthrate. Improvements in diet and advances in medical science enabled people to live longer.

Along with a growth in population, there continued to be a movement of people from one place to another, as there had been since the beginning of American history. One of the major patterns was the movement of people away from the center to the coasts. California enjoyed the largest increase, replacing New York, during the 1960s, as the most populous state. The mobility patterns also included a large movement from farm to city. From 1950 to 1962, 20 percent of the farm population moved out of farming. Blacks continuously moved out of the rural South, a development that made the population of the big cities increasingly black.

Movement from the central cities to the suburbs formed still another pattern. While it was not a new part of American life, suburbia grew at a rapid pace during the 1950s and 1960s, having failed to grow significantly during the Depression and the war. Suburban growth was higher than that of the total population and the central cities. Some cities, including Houston,

Dallas, San Antonio, Phoenix, San Diego, Los Angeles, and Jacksonville, grew substantially, but others, such as St. Louis, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Baltimore, declined. By the late 1960s, the number of suburbanites (76 million) exceeded city dwellers (61 million). The central cities added 6 million people from 1950 to 1968, while suburbia added 32 million.

Prosperity, government aid, and the values of millions of people produced suburbia's rapid growth. The federal government subsidized suburban development by building freeways and guaranteeing mortgages. The expanding white- and blue-collar middle classes had the dollars needed to move from the central cities. They could borrow more dollars to purchase the homes, the appliances, the automobiles, and the other things needed for suburban living. The suburbs promised satisfaction for their desires to "own" property and find an attractive way of life and a suitable environment in which to raise children. Their lives were not cut off from the city. Most suburbanites earned their incomes there and took advantage of other urban economic and cultural opportunities, although as the suburbs grew, factories, offices, and shopping centers, as well as homes, schools, and churches, were developed. The basic attractions of suburbia included relatively uncrowded conditions, clean air, and outdoor living. Its rapid growth provided abundant evidence of the scope of the economic boom. Thus, millions of people had the money as well as the desire to live outside the central city, while holding on to the latter's opportunities.

The mobility of the suburban immigrants was social as well as geographical. It reflected the rapid expansion of the middle classes, including the blue-collar middle class, and was a consequence of the dynamic character of the economy. Only a small number of Americans moved from rags to riches; many, however, made smaller but still significant moves and increased their holdings of material goods even when they did not change their jobs.

Poverty, while remaining a substantial part of American life, was declining; it no longer afflicted over half of the population, as it had before the 1940s. Suggesting that a family of four needed an income of at least \$4,000 in 1960 to be above the poverty line, social analysts found that 23 percent of the population was poor in 1960, a drop of about 15 percent in fifteen years.

In the 1950s, most middle-class Americans were unaware of poverty, for the poor lived in rural and urban slums, far from suburbia. They lived in the centers of big cities, in Appalachia, in the rural South, in the Minnesota iron-ore region, and in the New England textile towns. Many of the poor were black, and a new pattern of segregation was emerging. As better-off whites moved to suburbia, blacks from the South swelled the ranks of the poor in the central cities.

The continued existence of poverty was attributable to many factors: old age, poor land, technological developments, and educational deficiencies, among others. Displaced by machines, many of the poor lacked the skills needed to find new jobs. They could not find work even when they moved out of the hills or off of the farms and into the cities. The economy rewarded the well-trained worker; it did not provide enough opportunities for the untrained or poorly trained person.

Discrimination was also a factor. Although black Americans were making some progress their educational and economic opportunities remained far behind those of whites. The percentage attending college was half that of whites; blacks could not find higher-paying jobs, and the unemployment rate was much higher for blacks. The average wage for black workers was only 58 percent of the white average in 1958.

The economy, then, was not growing fast enough to provide everyone with a job and a satisfactory income. The growth rate had averaged 4.7 percent during the 1920s and remained at that level during the first half of the 1950s, but in the mid-fifties the average dropped to 2.25 percent. While the nation avoided mass unemployment on the scale experienced during the 1930s, unemployment continued to be a feature of American life—a very significant one for the people who experienced it. The frequent recessions moved the unemployment figure above 7 percent on several occasions, and it remained above 4 percent throughout the decade following the Korean War.

Despite economic progress, poverty continued to afflict millions of Americans during the 1960s. Many of the poor were white, and most lived outside the central cities, but a much higher percentage of blacks were poor and more than half of the blacks lived in the central cities. On the other hand, only 5 percent of suburbia was black. According to the President's Advisory Committee on Civil Disorders, the nation was dividing into two societies: "one predominantly white and located in the

suburbs, in smaller cities, and in outlying areas, and one largely Negro located in central cities."

In the cities, the impoverished black faced many problems that were difficult to escape. If he were born in the city or moved there at an early age, he was raised in crowded, unhealthy, noisy conditions; often his father did not live with the family; his mother was forced to work; and the crime rate in his neighborhood was high. Poorly educated in segregated schools in the rural South or the urban ghetto, he lacked skills. But he lived in a society that no longer needed unskilled workers, and he had to struggle against racial discrimination. Finding a job was difficult—almost all were low paying, and many provided only irregular employment.

Beyond the poor were the people who had risen only a short distance above the poverty line but had not become affluent. Half of the skilled craftsmen in 1966 earned less than \$7,000, and half of the white families in 1968 earned less than \$9,000. The not-quite-poor recognized and resented the existence of the wealthy classes above them. Hit by rising taxes and rising prices, these whites also felt threatened by blacks, who were similarly pressing for change and competing for work.

Poverty and near-poverty remained significant parts of American life, but the economic growth of the 1960s demonstrated that it could push millions of people across the poverty line. According to official estimates, only about 12 percent of the population, or about 25 million people, were below the line in 1968. Eight years earlier, about 40 million had been there.

Blacks as well as whites benefited from the growth of the 1960s. Black unemployment dropped from over 12 percent in 1961 to close to 6 percent in 1968. (For adult males, the percentage dropped below 4.) More than half of the blacks lived below the poverty line in 1961; less than one-third did in 1968. The median black family income moved from 54 percent of the white median in 1965 to 64 percent in 1969, and the percentage of black families earning \$7,000 or more per year rose from 17 in 1960 to 28 in 1966.

For many Americans, the black athlete symbolized the black advance. Baseball's major leagues had been closed to blacks until Jackie Robinson, a "revolutionist in a baseball suit," joined the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947. At one time, the black stars had been forced to compete in underpaid leagues of their own, but



by the late 1960s, one-quarter of the major league baseball players, one-third of the football players, and more than one-half of the basketball players were black. And the black percentages of the all-star teams were even higher.

The decline in poverty and other forms of social mobility were not accompanied by a levelling trend in the distribution of wealth and income. The top 5 percent of the families had 17.5 percent of the before-taxes income in 1947 and 15.6 percent in 1966, while the lowest 20 percent moved only from 5.1 to 5.6 percent. The nation had emphasized enlarging the pie, not cutting it in new ways.

The increasingly prosperous nation also experienced a religious revival, with many examples testifying to this occurrence: the increase in church membership from 64.5 million in 1940 to 123.8 million in 1966; the construction of many churches and synagogues, especially in suburbia; the widespread tendency of people to define themselves in religious terms and endorse basic religious doctrines; the popularity of the writings of Fulton J. Sheen, Norman Vincent Peale, and others and of religious films; the success of evangelists like Billy Graham; and the frequent references to religion by politicians. The revival was not concentrated in any one religious group; the nation continued to be pluralistic. Protestantism had lost its near monopoly on American religious life long before, and the Catholic and Jewish faiths, as well as the Protestant, enjoyed a new prosperity. The different religious groups became more tolerant of one another, although religious conflict did not disappear. The election of John F. Kennedy in 1960 testified to both the growth of tolerance and the persistence of conflict.

The revival is not easily explained. Some commentators have offered a crisis hypothesis, attributing the revival to the possibility of mankind's destruction in atomic war and other grim features of modern life. A political hypothesis stresses the importance of religion for a people involved in a cold war with an anti-religious Communism. On the other hand, a social hypothesis maintains that through religion, a highly mobile people, uprooted from their parents, relatives, and ethnic groups, found a means of defining and identifying themselves and an organization to which they could belong. The size of the movement indicates that all these factors contributed. Interestingly, it seems unlikely that lack of confidence in the possibility of

finding a "good life" dominated the revival, since most of the participants were also beneficiaries of the economic boom.

During these years, America also became a "leisure society." The advent of the forty-hour work week and the vacation with pay, as well as the increase in income, meant that leisure was no longer the monopoly of a small class. The average worker had twice as much leisure time as he had had in 1900. No longer dominated by old beliefs in hard work and saving, most Americans, including the suburban middle classes, placed a high value on having a good time. The increase in personal expenditures for recreation from \$8.5 billion in 1946 to \$26.3 billion in 1965 illustrated the growing importance of leisure.

Leisure-time activities took a variety of forms. In suburbia, hobbies, gardening, and the barbecue pit were important features of life. Attendance at major league baseball games increased from 18.5 million in 1946 to only 22.5 million in 1965, but attendance at other types of games, especially football, grew rapidly. Participation in sports also increased. The number of golfers grew from 2.5 million in 1948 to 7.8 million in 1965, the number of bowlers from 1 million in 1946 to 7.6 million in 1965, and the number of hunting and fishing licenses issued more than doubled. The mass media filled many hours away from work. Attendance at movies dropped from 90 million a week in 1946 to 44 million in 1965, a drop that encouraged the film industry to become more experimental. But households with radios increased from 34 million to 55.2 million in the same period, and the industry switched its emphasis from programming for the entire family to entertainment for teenagers and motorists. Movies and radio had to adjust to the arrival and development of television. Americans also had a rich variety of music available to them, facilitated by the advent of long-playing records and improved equipment. They purchased paperback books in huge numbers. Domestic travel increased from 508 billion passenger-miles in 1950 to 971 billion in 1966. Foreign travel increased even more rapidly, as the number of overseas travelers jumped from 676,000 in 1950 to nearly 3 million in 1966.

These and other leisure-time activities helped to convince most Americans that their way of life was a good one, superior to all others. Some skeptics and scholars insisted that the nation should not have such a lofty view of itself. C. Wright Mills, for example, maintained that conformity and elitism were the main

features of American life. William Appleman Williams insisted that American foreign policy amounted to nothing more than finding and protecting economic opportunity for American businessmen. Other intellectuals, such as Ralph Ellison, portrayed racism as the major feature of American life. Michael Harrington focused on mass poverty. In the early 1960s, scattered groups of students formed the Students for a Democratic Society, the Free Speech Movement, and other organizations to protest against particular features of American life. And in 1964 and 1965, many urban blacks rioted in protest against the aspects of life that seemed most important to them. Prominent literary figures, including William Faulkner, Jack Kerouac, William Styron, Norman Mailer, Tennessee Williams, and Edward Albee, lacked enthusiasm and optimism for the American scene and human prospects.

These skeptics, however, did not set the tone for American life in the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s. The rapid expansion of higher education more accurately reflected the dominant mood. That expansion was made possible by the economic boom. Expenditures on higher education went from \$675 million in 1940 to \$12.5 billion in 1966. The number of students, during the same period, jumped from 1.5 million to 5.9 million. In part, the increase was related to the baby boom. But there was also a spectacular growth in the percentage of the population, ages 18 to 24, that attended colleges and universities, with only slightly more than 9 percent attending in 1940, but nearly 28 percent in 1966.

The boom in education reflected American confidence. With widespread public and private support, the educational system assumed that the capacity to benefit from higher education was widespread. The nation, therefore, could supply such education for millions of people, and both the individual and society would benefit. The universities contributed to the spectacular development of American science, sought to serve all aspects of American life, not just the learned professions, and emphasized problem-solving techniques.

For many Americans, higher education now seemed to be an essential step in the progress of the individual. It opened doors; it provided the preparation and training needed to succeed in the corporate world. Higher education was no longer regarded as a privilege that should be reserved for a small segment of the

population. The prevailing idea was that everyone deserved an educational opportunity. Increasingly, the sons and daughters of blue-collar workers enrolled in colleges. Faced with narrow horizons themselves, these workers envisioned grand opportunities for their children. While desires for high incomes influenced family and individual educational decisions, other considerations also contributed, including a need for a satisfying job and an interest in enjoying the leisure time that was available.

Americans generally had confidence in their way of life, its capacity for improvement, and their prospects in it. They assumed that their economic system was functioning impressively and was capable of becoming even more successful. They had seen it move from long-term depression to an even longer boom; it had produced great changes in their daily lives. They had more "things" than ever before and more than any other people. They did not expect to create a perfect society, but they did expect to create a better one.

## Chapter 8

### The Liberal Revival

Prosperity and the Red Scare discouraged protest in the 1950s. But in the second half of the decade, liberalism began to revive, and a new protest movement also emerged in black America. While these were not calls for revolution, they were signs that discontent was growing. Troubled by society's problems, some people were willing to criticize what they saw and propose solutions. They did not expect perfection, but they did expect that some problems could be solved or, at least, reduced in size.

Soon after Eisenhower took office, liberalism began to show new signs of life and was well received in the congressional elections of 1958. The new liberalism was an intellectual as well as a political movement. It was linked to an earlier liberalism in its belief that the American system was fundamentally sound, its sensitivity to the existence of problems in American life, and its confidence in government, especially the federal government and the presidency. But it had new features as well, including a militant hostility to Marxism. To the liberal of the period, when Marxist analysis was applied to American life, it failed as a philosophy of history by falsely predicting the collapse of capitalism and the triumph of the proletariat. It did not appreciate the strengths of American capitalism, or understand the social structure. By stressing a class conflict—between the ruling class and the proletariat—Marxism missed America's pluralism, that is, the importance of many social groups.

More than in the past, liberals now called attention to the positive qualities of American life. They admired the nation for the strength it had demonstrated since 1932. They believed the United States was more than an extension of Europe—it was unique and superior, surely worthy of preservation and imitation—and it was the antithesis of Russia. America's pluralism seemed to be one of its most valuable qualities. Power was distributed rather than concentrated. The nation was dominated by a multitude of groups led by elites who participated more actively in politics than did other people. But those elites were subject to popular pressure. They competed with one another for support. They were open to ambitious and talented people, and they represented group interests quite effectively.

The liberals devoted great attention to civil liberties, civil rights, and economic growth. Respect for civil liberties seemed to be an essential feature of American life that was threatened in the modern world by totalitarianism abroad and McCarthyism at home. The nation's record in civil rights seemed to be its greatest shortcoming. Reforms were needed in order to bring the nation into conformity with its ideals and make it even more open and pluralistic. Constant economic growth seemed possible if all parts of the economic system functioned satisfactorily. An adequate rate of economic growth would reduce the size of all problems, facilitating, for example, efforts to integrate blacks into the mainstream of American life.

Liberalism revived during the second half of the 1950s even though it did not have the benefit of pressure from the radical left. Radicals had only a few representatives in American intellectual life and did not have a political party capable of running a candidate for the presidency. The Socialist party decided not to nominate a candidate after its dismal showing in 1952, when Norman Thomas's successor picked up only 20,000 votes. And the Communist party neither sponsored nor supported a candidate in 1956. In 1947, it had more than 70,000 members; by 1955, the number dropped to 20,000; in 1958, only 3,000 remained. Since 1947, the party suffered from American prosperity, from its obvious subservience to the Soviet Union, and from hostility to it. Communists had been forced to contend with the anti-Communist left, represented by such groups as the CIO and Americans for Democratic Action, as well as the McCarthyites. In addition, the party was damaged by the new Russian leader's revelations of the crimes of Stalin.

Also, liberalism made a comeback even though the Red Scare remained a factor in American life. No one emerged to take McCarthy's place. The Supreme Court, under the new Chief Justice, Earl Warren, placed restrictions on the consequences of the Red Scare. Kept alive by the House Un-American Activities Committee, among others, it still remained a source of trouble for liberals.

The Supreme Court began to deal more critically with anti-Communist efforts, however, and protected some individuals who had suffered from them. The Vinson Court had been tolerant of government action, but the Warren Court was more insistent upon its power to restrain the other branches of government. The Court avoided extreme claims of judicial power. Although it did not deny government any authority to limit freedom of expression in the interest of national security, it sustained individual claims in some loyalty-security cases, insisting that there were limits upon what the government could do.

Personnel changes were largely responsible for the change in judicial behavior. The replacement of Vinson with Warren helped Black and Douglas strengthen their libertarian view, as expressed, for example, in the Dennis case. The new Chief Justice developed a strong sympathy for the victim of governmental hostility; he was determined to use judicial power to protect the victim and to mitigate the excesses of American anti-Communism. Furthermore, the appointment of William J. Brennan, Jr., in 1956, to succeed Sherman Minton, a Truman appointee, meant that the Court had a four-man liberal bloc for the first time since 1949. The Court became the nation's strongest champion of free expression and its strongest critic of punishment for political beliefs or associations.

In 1956-1957, the Court protected individuals against the government in some important cases. New rulings limited legislative investigations and the results that could flow from them. In *Slochower v. Board*, the justices overruled the dismissal of a Brooklyn College professor under a provision in the city charter requiring dismissal without notice and hearing for any municipal employee who in the course of an investigation concerning his official conduct refused to testify on grounds of self-incrimination. The Court ruled that although officials could properly inquire into an employee's fitness, they could not seize upon his use of the Fifth Amendment privilege and convert it into a confession of guilt. The right of a citizen not to testify

against himself is, the Court maintained, one of his most valuable rights and "would be reduced to a hollow mockery if its exercise could be taken as equivalent . . . to a confession of guilt."

Two other cases, *Watkins v. United States* and *Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, overruled convictions for refusing to answer questions from the House Un-American Activities Committee and the attorney general of New Hampshire. The Court ruled that if investigators were to delve into private affairs, they would have to justify their probes by a valid legislative purpose, a specific authorization, and a reasonable demonstration of a government interest overriding individual rights to privacy. The Chief Justice voiced strong criticism of investigations of "subversion" that involved "a broad-scale intrusion into the lives and affairs of private citizens," the questioning of witnesses about their "beliefs, expressions, or associations," and the infringement of academic freedom. Such investigations tended to make the public cling to "orthodox and uncontroversial views and associations."

Other cases involved anti-Communist legislation designed to hurt members of the Communist party. In *Pennsylvania v. Nelson*, the Court invalidated state sedition laws, ruling that Congress had, by implication, superseded them with national sedition laws. Then, in *Yates v. United States*, the justices overturned the convictions of fourteen Communist party officials under the Smith Act. The opinion did not declare the act unconstitutional. It merely defined it in a narrower way than the Vinson Court had, insisting that the First Amendment *may* permit men to be jailed for conspiratorial action but not for making Communist speeches and reading Communist books.

Justice Tom C. Clark emerged as a vigorous critic of the liberal jurists. In dissents, he charged that the Court's construction of the Smith Act "frustrates the purpose of the Congress for the Act was passed in 1940 primarily to curb the growing strength and activity of the Party." He denounced the decisions on investigations as "a mischievous curbing of the information functions of the Congress" and destructive of the fact-finding power of the state in the loyalty-security area.

Reactions outside the Court indicated that the Red Scare still existed. Critics included the FBI, the National Association of Manufacturers, and conservative congressmen. Labelling one of



the decision days "Red Monday," they maintained that the Court had handed down "one pro-Communist decision after another" and had "opened the way to Communists, traitors, disloyal citizens and crooks of all kinds . . . to refuse to answer any questions which the witness arbitrarily decides for himself are not 'pertinent' to a legislative purpose." Many Americans still believed in the existence of an internal Communist conspiracy that could destroy the United States. Critics suggested that the Court was being affected by "some secret, but very powerful Communist or pro-Communist influence." Portraying Warren as a "hero" to the Communists and as incompetent, the critics suggested implementing security checks for law clerks and loyalty oaths for justices, and they called for actions to reverse the decisions, limit the powers of the Court, and impeach some of its members. Although death had removed McCarthy from the scene before the new fight reached its peak, some of his former friends and foes were active participants. His old ally, Senator William Jenner of Indiana, was one of the leaders in the battle against the Court.

Warren, Black, Douglas, and Brennan held their ground. In 1959, in *Greene v. McElroy*, the Court undermined established methods in the security program that dismissed employees on security reasons without allowing them to confront and cross-examine their accusers. Justice Clark now charged that the majority was giving private individuals "a constitutional right to have access to the government's military secrets."

In other civil liberties cases, from 1958 to 1960, Clark and his colleagues, with Felix Frankfurter and John Marshall Harlan playing especially important roles, defeated the liberal bloc, upholding the power of government to combat "subversive" influences. In *Beilan v. Board of Education*, the majority upheld the dismissal of a Philadelphia school teacher who refused to tell school authorities whether he had served in 1944 as an official in the Communist Political Association. In *Lerner v. Casey*, the Court upheld the dismissal of a New York subway conductor for invoking the Fifth Amendment when city authorities asked if he were currently a member of the Communist party. The justices decided that the employees had been removed only because their refusal to answer their employers' questions was evidence of their unreliability and incompetence. The same majority, in *Nelson and Globe v. Los Angeles*, also upheld the dismissal of a Los

Angeles county employee who invoked the Fifth Amendment before the House Un-American Activities Committee. A state statute commanded government employees to answer questions about subversion posed by duly authorized investigating agencies. Clark argued that the man had been removed for insubordination, not for invoking the Fifth Amendment. After all, the employee used the amendment even after he was warned that failure to answer the questions would result in dismissal.

Other decisions during the period suggested that Congress and the states no longer needed to worry about judicial limitations on investigatory powers. A majority on the Court regarded the Communist threat as serious and believed that legislative bodies needed power to deal with it. The justices, in *Barenblatt v. United States*, upheld the contempt conviction of a college professor who refused to answer questions posed by HUAC concerning his membership in the Communist party and his knowledge of Communist activities at the University of Michigan. In *Uphaus v. Wyman*, the Court sustained the contempt conviction of a clergyman who would not surrender to the attorney general of New Hampshire the guest list of a camp suspected of being a meeting place for Communists. Speaking for the Court, Clark maintained that the interests of the state in discovering the presence of possible subversive persons outweighed any right of privacy that may have been involved. The investigation was justified in the interest of self-preservation, "the ultimate value of any society."

The Court's retreat helped to reduce opposition to it and to save it from damaging legislation that would reduce its authority. The Court was defended by liberal senators and liberal pressure groups, especially the AFL-CIO and the NAACP, and Johnson's skillful operations as Senate majority leader were even more important for the Court's position. In the 1958 elections, the liberals increased their congressional strength substantially while several foes of the Court, including Jenner, did not return to Washington. Yet, the fears of conservatives had not been realized. Libertarian decisions, while suggesting that the anti-Communists had to recognize some limits on their activities, did not revive the Communist party.

Despite the low state of the Communist party, some Americans still thought in terms of Communist power inside the

United States. Nevertheless, even though the Red Scare had not gone away, liberalism gained strength. Forceful leadership, the emergence into view of several problems, the recession of 1958, and the slow rate of economic growth all contributed. National pride was also a factor, for many Americans were troubled by evidence that the United States was not doing as well in some areas as were other nations.

Convinced that the federal government could grapple effectively with the nation's social and economic problems, the liberals resisted Eisenhower's efforts to reduce the size and cost of government. Instead, they encouraged government's role, organizing several major legislative proposals. Those proposals had the support of organized labor, the National Education Association, and other pressure groups. And, as the liberal victories at the polls suggest, the proposals had popular support as well. The liberal revival, in other words, expressed growing demands for government action in domestic affairs. In addition, the revival constituted a challenge to the influence of business and military elites on national policy.

Liberalism had its greatest strength in the North and West, in Congress, and in the Democratic National Committee. Its leaders were senators and representatives, including Hubert Humphrey and Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota, Paul Douglas of Illinois, James Murray and Lee Metcalf of Montana, Joseph Clark of Pennsylvania, Patrick McNamara of Michigan, and Herbert Lehman of New York, and a chairman of the national committee, Paul Butler of Indiana.

Hoping to give the Democratic party a liberal image and to distinguish it from the Republican party, the liberals challenged Democratic leadership in Congress. The top man on Capitol Hill, Lyndon Johnson of Texas, regarded the liberals as one of the factions with which he must deal, rather than the group with which he should identify—although his behavior became more liberal as the liberal bloc grew and he became more interested in Northern votes. His test of success was passage of laws. In his view, Congress existed to legislate, and his task as majority leader in the Senate, from 1955 to 1960, was to keep the legislative process moving. He worked to avoid bitter fights within the sharply divided Democratic party, and he tried to find common ground that men with power and differing views could occupy. Rather



*Senator Paul Douglas: A Leading Liberal* (© Chicago Tribune, 1976)

than oratorical appeals, he relied chiefly upon negotiation and discussion with his colleagues, and he supplemented this technique with his power to do favors. He could help individual senators to move their pet bills along or to get desirable committee assignments. He could call upon them to play roles that would help their careers. He searched constantly for compromises in order to unite a majority of senators behind a proposal.

Johnson differed from the liberals in his relations with the President, as well as in his relations with conservative Democrats. While the liberals constantly challenged Eisenhower, the majority leader tried to cooperate with him. According to Johnson, the President's role was to provide leadership in the American system; and so, instead of trying to be a "prime minister" himself, he encouraged Eisenhower to act. Believing that no President could be cut down without hurting the office and the country, Johnson counselled his colleagues against large-scale attacks on Eisenhower.

While Johnson worked for legislation that could be passed in

the *existing* political situation, the liberals worked to create a new political situation that would produce laws to deal with the nation's problems. One of those problems was unemployment. In 1958, the economy again moved into a recession that pushed unemployment above 5 million for the first time since the 1930s. This figure represented nearly 8 percent of the work force. As in 1954, liberal Democrats demanded a substantial increase in government spending and a tax cut for lower income groups. Pressure for a tax cut became especially strong and had some support in the administration and in the business community. However, with help from Johnson and Rayburn, Eisenhower was able to resist that pressure. Once again the President warned of the dangers of too much action. The economic situation, he insisted, was not sufficiently severe to justify the proposed cuts. In the long run, they would harm rather than help the economy. His stand, and the continuing persistence of unemployment, increased the strength of liberal Democrats in the 1958 congressional elections.

This time, Eisenhower's cautious approach failed to produce full recovery. Unemployment, while dropping during 1959, averaged more than 5 percent in 1960, and the economy dipped once again. By the end of the year, unemployment reached 6.7 percent.

The performance of the economy received large-scale criticism from liberal Democrats. Pointing out that Germany, France, Japan, and Russia were growing faster than the United States, they blamed the administration for both the slow rate of economic growth and unemployment. Eisenhower frequently countered, during 1959 and 1960, with warnings about the dangers of large-scale government spending and deficits, and with pleas for policies that would produce a large budget surplus. He continued to suggest that private enterprise and a healthy business climate were the best means of stimulating economic growth. "I shall not be a party to reckless spending schemes which would increase the burden of debt of our grandchildren, by resuming, in prosperous times, the practice of deficit financing," he warned Congress. "I shall not fail to resist inflationary pressure by whatever means are available to me."

In addition to demands for improved economic conditions, federal action was being demanded to deal with the problems of the nation's schools. On the state level, the baby boom and

financial problems had produced crowded classrooms, and the National Education Association and many Democratic congressmen called for federal aid. Interestingly, it was as a result of a Russian space satellite, "Sputnik," launched in the fall of 1957, that national action in the field of education took place. In response to the fear that Russian students were being better educated, Congress passed the National Defense Education Act, providing college students with fellowships and loans. The law asserted a national interest in the quality of education. It was only by linking it with defense that education could gain federal support.

The increasing cost of health care problems of the aged, a growing and self-conscious group, generated additional pressures for national action. Truman had proposed a system of national health insurance under Social Security but had run into strong opposition from the American Medical Association (AMA). Eisenhower turned to efforts to speed the growth of private health insurance only to encounter opposition from both the AMA and the advocates of national health insurance. From 1957 to 1960, organized labor, social welfare organizations, and most Northern and Western Democrats rallied behind a bill to provide health insurance under Social Security for older Americans only. The AMA, most Republican and Southern Democratic congressmen, leading business and farm organizations, insurance companies, and the President successfully resisted this proposal. In 1960, Eisenhower did sign the Kerr-Mills bill, which limited national health insurance to the indigent aged.

Although liberals were gaining strength, they were unable to accomplish their objectives. The federal government continued to grow but more slowly than liberals desired and not in the ways that they wanted. During Eisenhower's last year, domestic spending was more than 50 percent higher than it had been eight years earlier. But most of that growth did not occur where the liberals wanted it.

The liberals were hampered by several factors. Divisions among liberals themselves reduced their effectiveness. They fought, for example, over whether or not desegregation provisions should be attached to federal aid for education. The conservative coalition, although reduced in size by the 1958 elections, remained influential. Congressional leadership also limited liberal accomplishments. Above all, the still popular

Eisenhower posed serious difficulties. He had become more vigorous than ever before in reaction to liberal demands, using rhetoric and the veto power to combat them.

The liberal revival reflected growing concern about domestic problems, but it also expressed confidence in the ability of established institutions and traditional methods to solve them, or at least reduce their size. Congress and the presidency, working together, influenced by pressure groups and responding to popular demands expressed in elections, could, the liberals assumed, promote progress. A prominent part of American life in the late fifties, liberals were neither complacent nor radical, pessimistic nor utopian.

## Chapter 9

### The Escalation of Black Protest

The escalation of black protest, in the second half of the 1950s, provided additional evidence of rising interest in attacking domestic problems and growing confidence in the nation's ability to move effectively on them. Unlike the liberals, not all blacks had confidence in established institutions and traditional methods. In fact, their doubts grew significantly. At the time, those doubts did not force most blacks to give up hope, but they did encourage them to experiment with new and dramatic ways of producing change and solving problems.

The NAACP was founded upon confidence in American institutions and methods, especially the judicial process and the Supreme Court. This civil rights organization enjoyed its greatest victory in 1954 in *Brown v. Board of Education*. In most respects, the Court, in 1954, remained what it had been in the Truman years. Five of the members had been appointed by Roosevelt, three by Truman. But one significant change had taken place. Eisenhower had appointed Earl Warren Chief Justice in 1953. Warren, a former governor of California, had devoted his life to politics. He was even less dominated by precedent than were his colleagues, and he was more inclined to use whatever power he had to promote his conception of the common good. He brought to his new position an almost instinctual commitment to action. Warren had no difficulty in identifying with the movement against school segregation and in carrying it further than it had previously been.



The leading representative of the forces of change was Thurgood Marshall. Speaking for the opponents, John W. Davis, one of the leaders of the American bar, argued that "separate but equal" was a principle that "has been so often announced, so confidently relied upon, so long continued, that it passes the limits of judicial discretion and disturbance." Marshall challenged the assumption that state-imposed separate schools *could* be equal schools. He also challenged the Court to act to protect minority rights, even against the majority will. The black lawyer insisted that "under our form of government, these individual rights of minority people are not to be left to even the most mature judgment of the majority of the people, and that the only testing ground as to whether or not individual rights are concerned is in this Court."

Marshall won the battle. In a unanimous decision written by the Chief Justice, the Court declared "that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place," for separate educational facilities are "inherently unequal" and thus deprive the segregated person of the equal protection of the laws guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment. A basic assumption of the decision was that separating children in elementary and high schools "from others of similar age and qualifications solely because of their race generated a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone."

It appeared that a highly significant change had taken place. The NAACP assumed that legal change would produce social change. When one of the justices asked whether Southern resistance might render a decision useless, Marshall replied: "Every single time that this Court has ruled, they have obeyed it, and I for one believe that the rank and file of the people in the South will support whatever decision in this case is handed down."

Experience seemed to support the NAACP's confidence. The decision in the white primary case in 1944 had been followed by an increase in the black vote in the South. By 1952, 20 percent of adult Southern blacks voted in the presidential election, a jump from 5 percent in 1940. And the decisions on higher education had led to the desegregation of several institutions.

The NAACP was aware that it was part of a larger movement. The consistent cooperation of the Justice Department

provided evidence of this, as did other efforts by the Truman administration. Marshall had, for example, referred in his argument in the Brown case to Truman's integrating the armed forces and had suggested that since whites and blacks were fighting together without trouble, they would be able to go to school together without trouble. American life, in other words, had direction and movement to it. That direction was away from segregation. That movement had great force behind it.

Soon after the Brown case, however, doubts began to arise about the ability of the NAACP and the Court to produce rapid change in Southern society. Southern blacks could not vote or ride on transportation facilities as they wished despite Court decisions. Nor could they study in integrated classrooms. Acceptance of the school decision was largely limited to the border states. More than 700 school districts were desegregated in the first three years after the decision, but, in the next three years, the number dropped below 50. By 1960, less than 1 percent of the black school children in the South were studying in integrated classrooms. Virtually none were doing so in the Deep South.

Contrary to Marshall's expectations, Southern whites resisted the Court decisions. After 1954, most white Southerners joined together in an effort to preserve the system of white supremacy established long ago.

Southern resistance had, of course, emerged before the Brown case. The Dixiecrat movement of 1948 provided evidence of growing determination to stand firm for the status quo in race relations. In 1950, Governors Herman Talmadge of Georgia and James Byrnes of South Carolina led the battle against the Court decisions of 1950, and two Southern liberals, Frank Graham of North Carolina and Claude Pepper of Florida, suffered defeats in Senate races when they seemed "soft" on the race question. Nearly all Southerners opposed Truman's civil rights proposals, and many of them voted Republican in the 1952 presidential election, despite strong Democratic traditions. Moreover, in Georgia, Mississippi, and South Carolina, whites upgraded black schools, made plans to abolish the public school systems, and made other moves to prevent desegregation.

Following the Brown decision, Southern opposition became massive. Many Southerners formed white citizens councils, a middle-class movement in the small towns and rural areas that

gained working class support and became the leading pressure group against desegregation. Others revived the Ku Klux Klan (KKK). All major politicians joined in, with Senators Harry F. Byrd of Virginia and James O. Eastland of Mississippi providing the leadership. With the churches, unions, corporations, and schools seeking to protect themselves in the crisis, and with no significant opposition, massive resistance became the main feature of Southern politics from 1955 to 1958.

The movement was driven by the feeling that "the Southern way of life" was being threatened. This psychology was especially strong in the rural South, which was overrepresented in Southern politics. Most Southerners felt threatened by Northerners, the federal government, the Supreme Court, liberals, the NAACP, the CIO, and many other forces. Industrialization and urbanization, which were promoted by business groups in the South as well as in the North, also worked against the traditional ways. And the system of race relations seemed to be the feature most in need of defense.

The champions of the established system proclaimed a theory of white supremacy and black inferiority. The theory, developed long before, was still endorsed by most whites in the South. A quarter of them believed that they would even be justified in using force to preserve the established systems of race relations. Only a small fraction favored integration. Others favored segregation but were somewhat cautious about the methods that should be employed. Most whites in the South insisted that segregation must be maintained to avoid racial "amalgamation"—the white race, Anglo-Saxon civilization, and order must be "preserved." Other ideas were also involved: hostility toward democracy, social welfare legislation, and labor unions. The old theory of state "sovereignty" also surfaced once again.

Southern whites employed a variety of techniques to preserve segregation. Rather than abide by its rulings, they attacked the Court. With Senators Eastland, Byrd, John McClellan of Arkansas, and J. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina providing much of the leadership, they attacked the justices as incompetent and as "indoctrinated and brainwashed by left-wing pressure groups." In 1956, many Southern congressmen signed a "manifesto" pledging to "use all lawful means to bring about a reversal of this decision which is contrary to the Constitution and to prevent the use of force in its implementation." They charged that

the Court had "dedicated itself to abolishing the States and federalizing the American people" and would destroy "the rights and liberties of the American people." Southerners also waged a massive propaganda campaign charging that Communist influences were responsible for the Court's behavior.

Southern resistance used various forms of pressure. State agencies moved against dissenters, tried to destroy the NAACP in the South, attacked teachers, censored books, and purged the voting lists. Private groups employed economic pressure against blacks seeking integration and the few whites who supported them. Mobs moved into action, often wearing the regalia of the KKK. In 1955 in Mississippi, whites killed four blacks, but no one was convicted. A riot at the University of Alabama the next year prevented a black girl, Autherine Lucy, from entering that institution. The following year, a mob attempted to block desegregation in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Some politicians also revived the doctrine of "interposition." They interposed the "sovereignty" of the state between local school officials and the courts. A number of states passed laws authorizing school closings; other laws permitted the substitution of private for public schools and modified or repealed compulsory attendance laws. Officials in Virginia and Arkansas closed schools that the courts had ordered to integrate in September 1958. The federal courts, including the Supreme Court, overruled most efforts to get around the Brown decision, but the tactics served to slow progress to a snail's pace.

If reliance on the Court was no longer adequate, the performance of the President and the Congress also failed to satisfy blacks. Eisenhower was reluctant to use his powers to promote desegregation. Before becoming a presidential candidate, he opposed desegregation of the armed forces. As a politician, the Republican interest in the Southern vote affected him. While he deplored discrimination during the 1952 campaign, he insisted that such evils must be dealt with by the states, not the federal government. He frequently insisted that "you cannot change people's hearts merely by law."

To Eisenhower, it seemed that the advocates of change were trying to do the impossible and should move more slowly. He refused to express his views publicly and would not take credit for the Brown decision. Moreover, he did not propose legislation to enforce and implement the decision, insisting that the

responsibility for such action belonged to others, acknowledging that while as President, he had to uphold the decision. He refused to take action during 1955, 1956, and much of 1957. Although the law of the land was being defied at the University of Alabama and in other places, Eisenhower did not call for compliance; he continued to maintain that responsibility for enforcement lay with "others."

Eisenhower did, however, promote some changes in race relations. He carried forward the desegregation of the armed forces, including restrooms, cafeterias, buses, and schools on military installations. He criticized segregation and discrimination in the District of Columbia, and he worked to increase black employment in the federal government and in firms with federal contracts. He had confidence that the Constitution gave him power to act in these areas. And he accepted advice to do so from a congressman from Harlem, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Eisenhower tried, however, to accomplish these acts without publicity and to avoid other moves.

Despite his previous refusal to propose legislative action, the President offered some civil rights legislation in 1956, at the urging of Attorney General Brownell, several other members of the administration, and some Northern Republicans. In part, they were politically motivated—they assumed that blacks could be moved back into the Republican party. In April, Eisenhower sent his proposals to Congress. They called for a Civil Rights Commission and an assistant attorney general for civil rights. Although he did not press strongly for the measure, the House passed it in July. But Johnson, fearing a filibuster, kept it off the Senate floor.

Civil rights was an issue in the fall election. Eisenhower reaffirmed his doubts about the ability of legislation to produce change and his conviction that state and local governments should be responsible for racial justice. Nevertheless, the only black congressman, Adam Clayton Powell, and most black newspapers endorsed him. He received 47 percent of the black vote, as compared with 42 in 1952. Many white Southerners also voted for him, and he added West Virginia, Kentucky, and Louisiana to the Southern states that had swung to him four years earlier.

Following the election, Eisenhower and the Democratic Congress combined efforts to produce a civil rights law. Eisenhower advocated only a limited measure and did not press hard for it;

Johnson worked harder for a similar bill. Previously, he had opposed civil rights proposals, although he had refused to endorse the Southern manifesto. Now he recognized that his party could suffer further losses to the Republicans in the Northern black neighborhoods and that his own hopes for the presidency would be hurt by the failure of a Democratic Congress to pass a civil rights bill endorsed by a Republican President. But he also recognized that Southern Democrats opposed such a bill. Seeking a compromise that would hold his party together, he obtained a narrow bill that focused on voting rights. In September, Congress passed a measure that dealt with voting rights and established a Civil Rights Commission.

Weak as it was, the civil rights law was still significant. It was the first federal law of its kind since Reconstruction, and it opened doors to other changes. "A man with a vote has his destiny in his own hands," Johnson argued in defense of the bill, "and he can do far more to help himself than we can do to help him." The new commission soon offered massive evidence showing the obstacles to voting by blacks in the South. It reported, for example, that only 8.8 percent of the adult blacks in Alabama were registered, only 3.9 percent were in Mississippi, and sixteen Southern counties with black majorities had no black voters.

At the same time that Congress passed the law, the President felt compelled to intervene in the school desegregation controversy. In September, he sent 11,000 troops into Little Rock because Governor Orval Faubus defied a court order for integration of Central High School. The governor used national guardsmen to block entry by black students. Then, after Faubus complied with a court order to remove the troops, a large mob moved against the black students. The mayor of Little Rock requested federal troops, and the President, finding the move repugnant but necessary, federalized the Arkansas guardsmen, and along with the 101st Airborne, they enforced the court order. Most Americans approved of the action, but it damaged the Republican party in the South. Nevertheless, the next year, Eisenhower's solicitor general, cooperating with Thurgood Marshall, successfully challenged, before the Supreme Court, Little Rock's plea for a delay in further desegregation.

After these episodes, opposition to school desegregation

began to weaken in the South, chiefly because of economic pressures. School closings threatened economic progress. Conflict and violence gave the South a bad image and discouraged investors. Thus, educators, the urban middle classes, and business leaders began to edge away from massive resistance. Schools in Virginia and Arkansas were reopened in 1959, even though they had to integrate. Miami desegregated its schools in 1959, and Houston and Atlanta refused to close their schools to avoid integration in 1960.

Congress passed another civil rights law in 1960. Again, both Eisenhower and Johnson worked for its passage. This measure, too, was narrow and sought to strengthen voting rights. While Eisenhower praised the bill, civil rights leaders found it quite unsatisfactory.

Change was taking place slowly, but by 1960, blacks, influenced by the combination of massive resistance, Eisenhower's caution, and growing confidence, were experimenting with other methods of producing change. Included in the traditions of black America, as well as in practices outside the United States, was an alternative to the NAACP's methods: direct, nonviolent action. On various occasions in the past, discontented blacks had employed the weapons of boycotts and sit-ins to protest Jim Crow laws and practices. In India, Mahatma Gandhi had effectively employed nonviolent protest in his campaign against British rule. In 1942, a new civil rights group, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), was formed, and it relied chiefly on nonviolent action. CORE was organized in Chicago by a small biracial group, chiefly students and members of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a Christian pacifist group. Although most members were white, blacks such as James Farmer and Bayard Rustin played major roles in the organization. The new organization believed that nonviolent and direct action, such as a sit-in in a restaurant that refused service to blacks, was the only viable way to produce change. With Farmer and Rustin as its leading advocates, CORE spread beyond Chicago to other cities and became a national federation in 1943, with Farmer as chairman. It focused its attention on public accommodations but also dealt with housing, employment, hospitals, and transportation. CORE remained active after the war but did not become a prominent organization. By 1954, however, it was weak, wracked by internal

conflict, and suffering from the fact that, having solved the problem with which it had been chiefly concerned—segregated public accommodations in the North and West—it lost its focus and drive.

In 1955, a new, charismatic champion of nonviolent protest emerged in Montgomery, Alabama—Martin Luther King, Jr., a young, black clergyman. “Nonviolent direct action,” according to King, “seeks to create such a crisis and establish such creative tension that a community that has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. . . . Freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed.”

King's rise to prominence came with a black boycott of Montgomery's bus system. The year-long boycott began with the refusal by Rosa Parks, a forty-three-year-old seamstress, to surrender her bus seat to a white man. It ended with a United States Supreme Court decision, obtained by NAACP lawyers, that desegregated buses in Montgomery and put pressure on other cities. From 1956 to 1959, similar efforts were made in Tallahassee, Birmingham, and Tuskegee. These activities encouraged King to form the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957 in order to draw together militant blacks in the Southern cities.

Preaching nonviolence and demonstrating that direct action could produce change in the South, King quickly developed a large, biracial following, gaining national and international fame. Greatly skilled as an orator, he employed religious language and Christian symbols of love and nonresistance. He distinguished between just and unjust laws, and appealed effectively to the growing feeling of guilt among the nation's whites, often scolding them for their lack of support for black protest. He believed that whites were capable of being transformed, and that they, as well as blacks, would benefit from the crusade, for it would enable them to live up to Christian and democratic values. He was willing to work and make compromises with white leaders, as well as put pressure on them. At the same time, he inspired his discontented followers to perform heroic acts of protest.

In this changing climate, CORE took on new life, and its membership more than doubled. The growth was a result of greater acceptance of racial equality and nonviolent direct





*The Triumph of Rosa Parks (UPI)*

action. Encouraged, the group developed plans for additional expansion, especially in the upper South. With nearly two decades of experience to draw upon, it could provide assistance and become more important when direct action became the dominant strategy.

Four years after Montgomery, a wave of sit-ins swept across the South. This phase of the civil rights movement was begun, in February 1960, by four black college students at the Woolworth lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. The movement spread quickly, emerging in seventy-eight communities by April. It mobilized many previously passive black adults as well as

young people. The demonstrators encountered violence but did not retaliate in kind. More than 2,000 young people were arrested, but the protests achieved victories in cities where blacks voted in significant numbers. Successes strengthened confidence in direct action.

The sit-ins produced yet another civil rights group. In June, leaders in the demonstrations, with help from King, formed the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Biracial, middle class, and Southern, SNCC was devoted to nonviolent direct action and hoped to use King's methods to gain entry into the America now enjoyed by the white middle classes.

The escalation of the civil rights movement, as well as the liberal revival, demonstrated that the second half of the 1950s was not a quiet complacent period in which everyone felt compelled to conform and no attempts were made to change American life. It was a period of growing discontent. American society contained features that many regarded as serious problems needing resolution. These, coupled with concepts of what the nation should be, generated pressures for change. Although the White House was not highly sensitive to problems or eager for change, many Americans were. And some began to ask tough questions about the methods that must be used to produce it.

The period was one of growing confidence that America's defects could be removed or reduced in size. The change in methods employed by the civil rights movement was influenced by frustrations, but the advocates of direct action believed in their ability to transform America. This belief involved a degree of confidence in whites and in American institutions. American life seemed capable of being reformed. And the goal was an integrated society, a society in which blacks would participate on equal terms and in close association with whites. Such a society seemed both desirable and within reach.

## Chapter 10

# The Military-Industrial Complex and the New Crisis

Liberals and black militants were not the only ones demanding change in the second half of the 1950s. Another major group wanting changes was the "military-industrial complex." While it, too, had confidence in America, it viewed the nation's needs very differently. Others joined with the complex in advocating more effective military policies, convinced that developments abroad demanded them and confident that the United States could develop them.

Eisenhower introduced the term military-industrial complex and warned against this new force in American life in his farewell address as president. His warning was a response to the growing criticism of his foreign and military policies. A new sense of crisis, resulting from new Communist advances, influenced the criticism.

In his message, the President expressed his concern over several recent developments and their potentialities. "This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience," he explained. "The total influence—economic, political, even spiritual—is felt in every city, every statehouse, every office of the Federal Government." He also called attention to new ties connecting science with government and the military. He went on to warn against "the acquisition of unwarranted influence . . . by the military-industrial complex" and a "scientific-technological elite."

As Eisenhower's terminology suggests, there were several aspects to this new feature of American life. He was not talking only about the rise of the military, although that development was part of the story. Once a small factor in American life, the military had become large and prominent, chiefly because the nation developed a more active foreign policy. The armed forces developed especially strong ties with American industry. Those ties, so obvious during World War II, were maintained after the war, as the nation chose to rely upon private business firms, rather than government agencies, for the development of weapons.

The military-industrial complex also included congressmen. Many of them had served in the armed forces and had maintained their connections, serving as reserve officers. Most had defense contracts in their districts. Some congressmen, however, were more important than others. One observer suggested when two Georgians, Senator Richard Russell and Congressman Carl Vinson, headed the armed forces committees that the addition of "one more base would sink the state."

Some universities also developed ties to the military. They, too, obtained defense contracts as the military's budget for research and development jumped from only slightly above \$500 million in 1945 to well over \$5.5 billion in 1960. A large part of the money went to the universities. Groups of scientists in leading institutions, like the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, engaged in secret defense-related research.

The scientists included social scientists, who often used computers for "systems analysis." Some worked for new institutions, such as the RAND Corporation, that provided sophisticated analyses of foreign and military policy problems and theoretical justifications for the military-industrial complex. In 1960, one of these theorists, Herman Kahn, published a widely discussed book, *On Thermonuclear War*, that challenged the assumption that the new weapons, if used, would destroy mankind. Kahn argued that such wars would surely be fought, that they did not need to be totally destructive, and that the United States must be willing to devote all the resources necessary to defend itself against the Soviet Union. He was convinced that the United States could and should spend much more on defense.

Finally, the complex had a mass base. Veterans organizations formed one component; they could be counted upon to protect

and promote the interests of the military. Labor organizations representing workers in the defense industries were also a part. By the early 1960s, nearly 5 percent of the nation's employees produced goods and services for defense. And some cities, including Los Angeles, San Diego, Seattle, Wichita, Ogden, and Huntsville, became "defense communities," as a consequence of their dependence on defense industries, military and naval bases, and related facilities. Other communities were transformed since the 1930s from small villages into bustling cities as defense monies poured in.

Clearly, the military was not an independent power. It was both strengthened by and dependent upon others who shared interests with members of the armed forces. Furthermore, the complex was not a solid power bloc. It was weakened by internal conflict. The services competed with one another for the largest possible share of the military budget, proposing conflicting strategic theories as they struggled for dollars. Business firms seeking contracts also battled with one another. According to one participant, "What appears to be intense interservice rivalry . . . in most cases . . . is fundamentally industrial rivalry." And communities and their congressional representatives in the complex also competed with one another.

The military was not the most powerful group in American life, or even within the complex. The top spots were occupied by business leaders. In 1953, for example, Charles Wilson left a giant contractor, General Motors, to become Secretary of Defense. In addition, concern about their futures after military retirement encouraged officers to follow the lead of defense industrialists, for they could reward high-ranking retired officers with high-paying jobs. Industrialists valued the knowledge and skill of the officers, and hundreds of them became executives of leading defense corporations.

But individual businessmen and their firms were not powerful enough to hold on to top positions in the defense industry. The list of major contractors changed frequently, as some companies lost ground while others gained. The best illustration was the sharp drop from prominence of the automobile industry, including GM, during the time that Wilson served as Secretary of Defense. While the automotive industry fell back, aircraft companies and electronics firms moved up. Even though Wilson was the top man in the complex, his industry and his firm were

defeated by technological developments and economic and strategic theories that favored air power. Thus, the air force received half of the defense budget during the Eisenhower years. In 1954, it obtained the opportunity to build the intercontinental ballistic missile, a decision that forced the transformation of the aircraft industry into the aerospace industry, increasing its dependence upon government.

Thus, the military-industrial complex was a vast, loosely organized pressure group for an active foreign policy relying chiefly upon military power. The complex functioned as an advocate of change. Members publicized their version of American weaknesses and stressed the need to build up the armed forces. They argued that the nation could afford to spend much more money on defense. In fact, they insisted that the economy would be stimulated by such an increase. During this period, the armed forces did spend most of the federal budget and a much larger part of the gross national product than they had before World War II; but they and their allies were not satisfied.

The activities of the military-industrial complex alone did not explain the rising criticism of Eisenhower's policies during his second term. Developments abroad were even more important. A sense of international crisis developed, gripped many Americans, and generated demands for change.

Russia, and Communism, was seen as making a great deal of progress in many areas. That progress produced a sense of crisis. Russian gains in the arms and space race contributed significantly to this sense. By the late 1950s, Russia not only had atomic and hydrogen bombs, it had a superior delivery system, which was demonstrated when a powerful Russian rocket launched the earth satellite Sputnik in 1957.

Russia was also making progress in the Middle East, to the dismay of Americans. While Russia had almost no influence there as late as 1955, rapid gains were being made, especially in Egypt. A Communist breakthrough in Latin America also generated alarm. In January 1959, a revolutionary, Fidel Castro, came to power in Cuba and was quickly viewed by American leaders as a Communist. He employed authoritarian policies and nationalized properties; there were some Communists in his government; and after clashing with the United States, Castro received help in the form of arms, basic supplies, and oil from Russia.

Communist activities in Asia and Africa added to American concern. The Chinese Communists pressured Chiang's regime on Formosa. The American-backed Diem regime in South Vietnam encountered guerrilla warfare from a revolutionary group, the Viet Cong, that received some aid from North Vietnam. And in the Congo, the Soviet Union provided support for one of the factions struggling for control.

The apparent renewal of Russian efforts at expansion in Europe also contributed to the growing sense of crisis in the United States. Apparently emboldened by Sputnik, the Russians put new pressure on Berlin, beginning in November 1958. They hoped to cut off the flow of people from East Germany to the West, and they also seemed eager to force the United States to withdraw from that city, a move that would surely weaken the confidence other nations had in Americans.

As these developments moved forward, criticism of Eisenhower and pressures for changes in American policies mounted rapidly in the United States. Republicans as well as Democrats, and people outside as well as inside the military-industrial complex—all criticized foreign policy. The pressures and criticism reflected more than partisanship and self-interest. And, unlike the criticism of the Truman administration, this pressure came chiefly from advocates of containment. They did not want to scrap containment; they only wanted to make it more effective.

The pressures and criticism took two major forms. Some of the critics focused on foreign aid, advocating a heavier emphasis on economic ways of checking Communism. "Bread, not guns, may well decide mankind's future destiny," Senator Humphrey predicted. The defeated presidential candidate, Adlai Stevenson, was also a prominent advocate of the nonmilitary approach. He expressed the sense of crisis that many Americans felt after 1956: "Our Russian competitors are much tougher than most of us have yet realized—and this time we might get licked, unless we are willing to change our habits, our political behavior, and our complacent outlook on the world." He emphasized two themes—halting the arms race and promoting economic development in Asia and Africa. In his view, the administration was too inclined to rely upon military power and to rattle the saber.

George Kennan, the philosopher of containment, was another who criticized the emphasis on military power. He pro-



*Adlai Stevenson and Hubert Humphrey: Two Critics of the Eisenhower presidency (Brown Brothers)*

posed a de-escalation of the nuclear arms race and a pullback of Russian and American forces in Central Europe, a proposal that was labelled "disengagement." The proposal appealed to many who feared nuclear war.

Other critics urged an increase in military power. They charged that the American military establishment had become too small and too simple. Confident that the economy could afford it, they advocated a substantial increase in military spending. Some, like former Secretary of State Acheson and Harvard scholar Henry Kissinger, proposed the enlargement of the army. They argued that the United States needed an alternative to massive retaliation since the Russians had gained great strength in the new weaponry. General Maxwell Taylor, resigning as army Chief of Staff in 1959 so as to be free to criticize Eisenhower, argued that, in the new military situation, the Communists would promote a series of limited challenges, confident that the United States would not retaliate for fear of Russian missiles and bombs.

While some critics called for an enlargement of conventional forces, others advocated further development of the new



weaponry. These critics, including Senator Stuart Symington of Missouri, the first Secretary of the Air Force, spoke of a "missile gap," which they defined as dangerous Russian superiority in the development and deployment of missiles.

Even Lyndon Johnson joined in the criticism of President Eisenhower. Frequently in the late 1950s, the Senate majority leader maintained that the administration needed to spend much more on the military. The Texan also joined in a related attack upon the President, charging that not enough was being done to explore outer space.

Eisenhower did make some modifications in his policies in response to developments at home and abroad. Early in 1957, he outlined an "Eisenhower Doctrine." The doctrine clearly extended containment to the Middle East by declaring that the nation was determined to defend the region by economic and military means against aggression by "international communism." The next year, he sent Marines into Lebanon to defend a pro-Western regime against pro-Nasser rebels. Elsewhere in the underdeveloped world, he increased economic assistance slightly, devoting a larger share to economic development. He also made plans for the promotion of reforms in Latin America, an area that had received only a small percentage of American economic aid. During 1959 and 1960, he staged personal ceremonial tours in Latin America, Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. (However, anti-American riots forced cancellation of a trip to Japan in 1960.) The administration also took several steps to topple Castro, including economic pressures and the preparation of an anti-Castro force to invade the island. Defense spending was increased. The missile program was enlarged. Greater attention was given to military research and development. And a new agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, was established to give the space program a boost. In addition, the President reaffirmed the nation's determination to defend Formosa and Berlin, and surveillance of Russia, with high-flying U-2 planes, was maintained.

Eisenhower not only responded to the developments abroad that were troubling many Americans, he made even greater efforts to deflate the growing sense of crisis. Insisting that American defenses were sound and that "they are tailored to the situation confronting us," the President downgraded the seriousness of Soviet progress in the development of missiles. He also main-

tained that his critics were paying too much attention to the military aspect of international affairs and not enough to other factors, including American moral superiority.

The President placed a greater emphasis on economic conditions. He had not accomplished as much as he desired during his first term in the battle over the budget. Thus, at the beginning of the second term, he pressed again for cuts in government spending including the biggest item, the military budget. Eisenhower still feared the vast government spending that his critics proposed. As he remarked to an adviser: "If we let defense spending run wild, you get inflation . . . then controls. Then a garrison state . . . and *then* we've lost the very values we were trying to defend." Eisenhower's efforts frustrated the military-industrial complex. And three army chiefs of staff resigned during his years as President to protest against his military policies. It was in the context of this battle over military spending that Eisenhower issued his warning against the military-industrial complex. It seemed to be an especially dangerous force. Its proposals, if accepted, would severely damage the American economy, and, then, the United States would not be able to play its fundamental role in the containment of Communism.

The criticism of Eisenhower's foreign and military policies is further evidence that the 1950s was not a placid decade. Discontent was one of the features of the period, and discontent grew during the last years of the Eisenhower administration. The dissatisfied elements in American society agreed on one important point: the national government should be doing much more. The nation faced major and growing problems, and the government must make greater efforts to solve them. Eisenhower's critics appeared to assume that the American government was capable of becoming much more active both at home and abroad. At least, there was no significant controversy among the critics on this point, although different critics had different problems at the top of their agendas. The nation seemed to be a vast reservoir of power, waiting to be tapped by an effective leader eager to grapple simultaneously with domestic and foreign problems whose solutions could no longer be postponed. To the many who held such beliefs, the defects of Eisenhower's restraint were obvious. Its virtues could not be seen.

## Chapter 11

### Recovery and Reform

With the election of John F. Kennedy in November 1960, the Democrats regained control of the White House. Kennedy, an Irish Catholic and the son of an enormously successful businessman, represented and reflected many of the pressures for change that had been building up. He hoped to alter policies and, as a result, to alter social and economic realities. Endorsing relatively ambitious theories about the powers of his office and the national government, he hoped to have a major impact on American life and the world. Breaking with the practices of his predecessor, Kennedy sought to use his powers more actively and boldly. His accomplishments, however, fell short of his ambitions.

From the beginning, Kennedy's efforts were weakened by the small size of his victory. His contest with Richard Nixon produced an unusually large turnout on election day, even larger than Eisenhower and Stevenson had produced. But Kennedy's margin of victory was about as narrow as possible: less than 120,000 votes out of nearly 70,000,000. He received 49.7 percent of the total, while Nixon received 49.6. In fact, Nixon carried more states—twenty-six.

Kennedy ran behind his party while Nixon ran ahead of his. From the outset, the Democratic candidate was weakened by his religion, although it helped him in the Northeast, where there was a large Catholic population. Elsewhere, however, Kennedy's

religion hurt him even more than it helped him in the Northeast. It prevented him from taking advantage of rural discontent in the Middle West and damaged him severely in the South, where Protestant Democrats voted for Nixon in significant numbers.

Although Kennedy was the leader of the majority party, and that party controlled the presidency and Congress, he was not in a strong position to promote change. Nevertheless, he was determined to do so. "All of this will not be finished in the first one thousand days, nor in the life of this Administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet," he suggested as he took on his new responsibilities. "But," he added, "let us begin."

Kennedy was not held back by theories about the presidency, theories that had restrained his predecessor. He believed that more vigorous and effective presidential leadership was required to produce more successful responses to the problems that the nation faced. He had an enthusiasm for his job and for the game of politics, which Eisenhower lacked. "I have a nice home, the office is close by, and the pay is good," Kennedy quipped.

In addition, Kennedy had confidence in himself. His style differed from Truman's as well as from Eisenhower's. He was more sophisticated and articulate than the Missourian had been and more convinced of his right to rule. Regarding themselves as deserving of the power that was now theirs, Kennedy and his advisors had great self-confidence, even if the voters had not demonstrated overwhelming confidence in them. According to one critic, Midge Decter, the Kennedy administration sought "to impose an image of itself on American society and American history: an image of itself as the rightful, by virtue of intrinsic superiority, American ruling class."

Kennedy was restrained, however, by his appraisal of the political situation. He recognized that conservatives in and out of Congress held substantial power. The coalition of Southern Democrats and Republicans remained powerful in Congress. In fact, in the 1960 election, the conservatives had strengthened their position in the House of Representatives. Kennedy knew that he was not in a strong position to deal with these people. Thus, he frequently held back. "There is no sense in raising hell, and then not being successful," he believed. "There is no sense in putting the office of the Presidency on the line and then being defeated."

In pushing for change at home, Kennedy was also restrained

by a desire to overcome the pro-Republican bias of business leaders, to persuade them that a Democratic administration was not antibusiness. Many businessmen were alarmed by the liberal revival and were convinced that they must become more active in politics to combat it. In his speeches, Kennedy frequently courted these men, declaring his belief in their importance and in the system. He confirmed these views by appointing successful businessmen and financiers to cabinet posts. He was not concerned about bigness in business and believed that government and business should cooperate to achieve both economic growth and an adequate defense program. Furthermore, he broke with the tradition of his party and proposed special tax incentives. He hoped these would stimulate economic growth by encouraging industrialists to expand and modernize their plants. He also championed government guarantees and tax credits for companies operating overseas, aided many firms by expanding defense spending, and supported Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara's efforts to remodel the defense establishment in the image of the Ford Motor Company.

While such actions generated some support for Kennedy, others troubled businessmen. In staffing his administration, he did not draw as heavily upon businessmen as his predecessor had; rather he relied more heavily on intellectuals, like the Harvard historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Furthermore, the President attacked the steel companies for raising prices. He proposed tax reforms to close loopholes, and he argued for a higher minimum wage. According to one Wall Street joke: "When Eisenhower had a heart attack, the market broke. . . . if Kennedy would have a heart attack, the market would go up." According to another tale, in seeking to reassure a businessman that the economic outlook was good, Kennedy declared, "If I weren't President, I'd be buying stock myself." The businessman replied, "If you weren't President, so would I." This attitude—lack of confidence in the administration among businessmen—has been used to explain the sharp break in the stock market in May 1962. Bumper stickers stated: "Help Kennedy Stamp Out Free Enterprise" and "I Miss Ike—Hell, I Even Miss Harry." During his last year in office, however, such criticism declined, as more businessmen, especially in the larger firms, came to recognize Kennedy's serious efforts to cooperate with and benefit them.

Despite restraints, Kennedy made some advances at home.

He obtained new social and economic legislation, including laws attacking structural unemployment through area redevelopment and manpower training programs. He changed previously established programs, such as Social Security and slum clearance, and carried forward campaigns for other proposals, including federal aid to education and medical care for the aged under Social Security.

The Democratic President made an especially large effort to promote economic growth and full employment. At the beginning of 1961, the nation was in its third recession since 1953, and nearly 7 percent of the work force was unemployed. Kennedy's thinking was influenced by the "new" economists, such as John Kenneth Galbraith, who advocated substantial expansion of government spending. In 1960, Kennedy, too, criticized Eisenhower for failing to produce an adequate rate of economic growth and full employment. More receptive to the advice of professional economists than were any of his predecessors, he employed a group of self-confident "Keynesians," led by Walter Heller of the University of Minnesota, whom Kennedy appointed as the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers. They argued that the nation's chief economic problem was sluggish growth, not inflation, corporate power, or the maldistribution of income. As Keynesians, they believed fiscal policy was the most important weapon to use in attacking that problem, that it could be attacked successfully, and that the attack would not create other problems that could not be solved. They persuaded him that a balanced budget was irrelevant, suggesting that he should persuade the public, including businessmen, that many popular economic theories, especially the fear of budget deficits, were harmful "myths."

Kennedy's hopes for a harmonious and powerful society made him receptive to these ideas about economic growth. The health of the economy seemed to him to be a matter of basic importance. Economic growth could reduce social conflict and tension by satisfying material needs. It could also aid in the expansion of American power, by supplying the resources needed to provide more foreign aid and enlarge the armed forces.

But even in this area, Kennedy moved somewhat cautiously. While he took some minor antirecession steps and obtained passage of various antirecession programs soon after taking

office, he did not move as quickly as his economists desired. His decision to make a major change in fiscal policy did not come until June 1962. Moreover, he did not introduce his major economic proposal until January 1963, and he did so only after employing his oratorical skills to gain support for the Keynesian system. Furthermore, even though he believed in many types of government action, he rejected the ideas of big spending, proposed by Galbraith and others, that emphasized shortcomings in American life. While spending increased during his presidency, the increase was largely limited to defense and space programs.

When Kennedy finally acted, he endorsed deficit financing but not greater spending. He advocated cutting taxes by \$10.2 billion, while maintaining the existing level of expenditures. Businessmen especially, who seemed quite discontented with the administration in the spring of 1962, appeared likely to support his approach, for they had long sought cuts in taxes on corporate profits and high incomes. The proposal called for a large, across-the-board reduction in personal and corporate tax rates. It was, moreover, a conservative form of Keynesianism. It was Keynesian in that it stressed the importance of deficit financing; it was conservative in that it emphasized a cut in taxes rather than an increase in spending.

Although Kennedy worked hard for his proposal, it failed to become law before his death. Most business groups quickly rallied behind it, demonstrating that belief in a balanced budget was not their strongest conviction. The proposal also gained the support of labor leaders, although they believed that tax cuts should benefit lower-income groups, and they were not opposed to spending proposals. Passage was delayed by debates about tax reforms, the size and character of the cuts, and expenditure levels, and by the resumption of recovery. The House did not pass the bill until September 25; and at the time of Kennedy's death, it was tied up in the Senate Finance Committee, headed by Senator Byrd of Virginia, a leading advocate of cuts in government spending. Opposed to Keynesian economics of any type, he insisted that spending as well as taxes must be cut.

Thus, while Kennedy changed economic attitudes to some extent, he only made minor changes in the economic conditions. In November 1963, unemployment was still above 5 percent.

In addition to the economy, the Democratic President spent an unusually large amount of his time and energy in the cause of

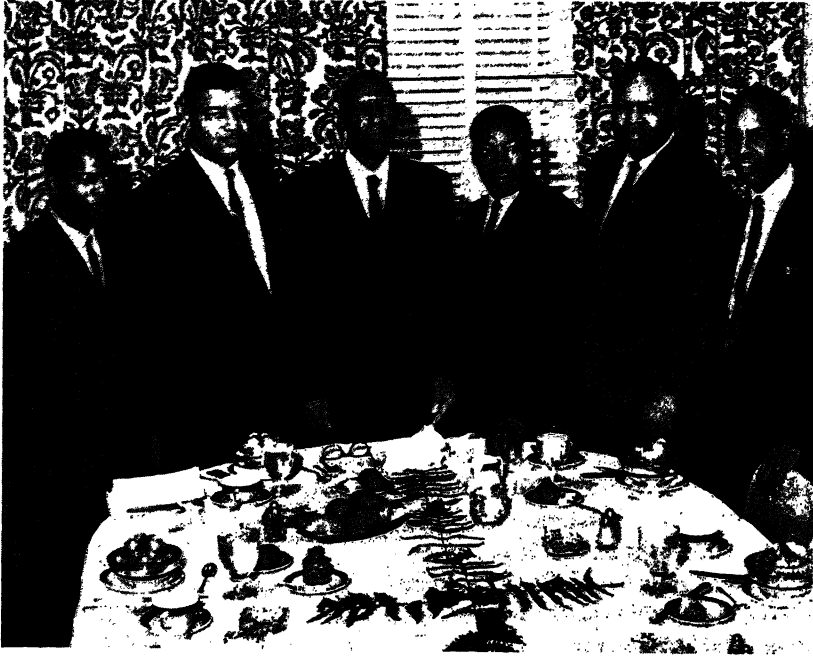
civil rights. Personal interest alone does not explain this action. Previously, he had not been a champion of civil rights legislation, although he had supported the efforts of others. He was more interested in it than Eisenhower had been, but his concern, before coming to the White House, was not equal to Truman's.

Political motives forced Kennedy to be concerned with race relations. He had worked hard and successfully to return blacks to the Democratic party, at a time when some Republicans were actively competing for their support. He also benefited from the support that Southern whites gave to Nixon, as well as his own support for King. Black support for the Democratic presidential candidate had dropped from 75 percent in 1952 to 67 percent in 1956. But Kennedy's efforts were rewarded with the votes of 78 percent of the blacks who participated in the presidential election of 1960. Without their strong backing he would not have been elected, for blacks were crucial to his victories in key states, since he received only 48 percent of the white vote.

Furthermore, Kennedy felt the pressure from the direct action phase of the civil rights movement. In May 1961, CORE, under Farmer's leadership, began a "freedom ride" to Alabama and Mississippi, and was later joined on that ride by SNCC and SCLC. Modelled after CORE's Journey of Reconciliation of 1947, the ride was precipitated by a Supreme Court decision in *Boydton v. Virginia*, December 1960. In its ruling, the Court extended the prohibition against segregation in interstate travel to cover terminals as well as trains and buses. Using the foundations laid by lawyers and judges, the bus ride was designed to test and force implementation of the decision. The riders encountered mob violence in Anniston, Birmingham, and Montgomery, Alabama, including the burning of the bus in Anniston. They were arrested and jailed in Jackson, Mississippi. Nevertheless, the trip succeeded. It led to improved conditions on buses and in bus stations for blacks, for the Interstate Commerce Commission ruled against segregated facilities in interstate travel and soon enforced the ruling effectively.

The freedom ride was the most momentous event in CORE history and marked its emergence as one of the top civil rights organizations. The event propelled the organization, and its new director, into the national headlines and stimulated rapid growth of the organization. Gaining new strength in both North and South, old chapters were revived and many new ones formed.





*Civil Rights Leaders: John Lewis, Whitney Young, Jr., A. Philip Randolph, Martin Luther King, Jr., James Farmer, and Roy Wilkins (UPI)*

CORE had insisted that direct mass action was the only way for blacks to realize, in practice, the results of the legal decisions the NAACP had won. The freedom ride was proof that people would participate in a protest when the issue involved a service that many used, and direct action demonstrated that it could produce results.

The new phase of the civil rights movement continued to develop, reaching a high point in the spring and summer of 1963. In the spring, King led an important and well-publicized protest in Birmingham, a city that he regarded as "probably the most thoroughly segregated city in the United States." Encountering enormous opposition, the demonstrators courted mass arrests, were arrested and jailed, and experienced violence and police brutality. In May and again in September, whites and blacks rioted in Birmingham, where a black church was bombed, killing four black girls. And, in Mississippi, a murderer took the life of an NAACP official, Medgar Evers.

By now, the civil rights movement was large and broad-based. Blacks of every class were involved. Whites, including college students and clergymen, worked alongside blacks. The activities called attention to problems in the North as well as the South. As a result of migration, most blacks now lived outside the South, and in the North and West, they experienced segregation in schools and housing, unemployment, and discriminatory hiring practices. In 1963, CORE stepped up its efforts in the North, focusing its attention on housing and employment problems and, to a lesser extent, on school segregation and police brutality. The organization relied chiefly on picketing, marches, sit-ins, and boycotts but also used rent strikes and obstruction of traffic to achieve results. The techniques produced a number of victories, especially in dealings with business firms, but they were not very successful in school segregation, police brutality, and urban housing problems. Public officials, instead of helping the cause, often crushed the demonstrations.

In the summer of 1963, the movement was drawn together in a giant "March on Washington." Two veterans of civil rights politics, A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin, initiated this effort. SCLC, SNCC, and CORE endorsed it. The NAACP and the Urban League supplied most of the financial support. Many religious groups and some labor leaders joined the march. On August 28, one-quarter of a million people were drawn to Washington, including about 50,000 whites. They listened to speeches by Roy Wilkins of NAACP and John Lewis of SNCC. In a remarkably effective speech, King demanded immediate, large-scale federal action designed to provide "jobs and freedom" for black Americans. According to King, the demonstrators hoped "to dramatize an appalling condition." While he appealed once again for cooperation between whites and blacks and for nonviolence, he warned that the "whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges."

None of Kennedy's predecessors had faced such tremendous pressures for change in race relations, and his vision of the United States in foreign affairs required a response to those pressures. The America he envisioned needed social harmony and needed to be a good example for other peoples. The widespread publicity given to violence in the South seemed to him to be extremely harmful.

Influenced by these pressures and visions, Kennedy made a greater effort to produce change in race relations than had any of his predecessors. In 1961, breaking with Eisenhower's policy, he indicated approval the Brown decision. He stepped up enforcement of court orders on school desegregation and expressed his sympathy for the demonstrators. He provided protection for the freedom riders, pressed the Interstate Commerce Commission to ban segregation in interstate transportation facilities, and expanded efforts to promote job opportunities for blacks in the federal government and in business firms that had government contracts. The next year, he issued a housing order attacking discrimination in housing, and he protected James Meredith, with federal marshalls and troops, when a mob sought to keep this black student out of the University of Mississippi.

Despite these efforts, champions of civil rights, in 1961 and 1962, were disappointed with Kennedy. They were chiefly distressed by his failure to push for broad civil rights legislation. Although he had promised to press for such legislation in 1960, he now justified inaction by emphasizing political realities: "If we drive Sparkman, Hill and other moderate Southerners to the wall with a lot of civil rights demands that can't pass anyway, then what happens to the Negro on minimum wages, housing and the rest?"

During this period, Kennedy emphasized the need for blacks to use their vote. This approach appealed to him, in part, because it did not require major legislation. He did not want to risk alienating Southern Democrats whose support he needed in other areas, economic and foreign policy, which were more important to him than was civil rights. In addition, his emphasis on voting was in keeping with his own background. The grandson of an Irish immigrant, he recognized what politics had done for Irish-Americans, and he assumed that voting power would enable blacks to make the same advances.

Furthermore, by emphasizing the power of voting, the President could rely on his brother, Robert, now serving as Attorney General, for assistance. Although he, too, often disappointed the civil rights movement, Robert Kennedy had a stronger commitment in this area than did the President. With Robert Kennedy's participation, the Justice Department stepped up enforcement of the Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1960. The White House encouraged civil rights groups to mount large-scale registration

drives. Aiming for substantial change by 1964, the drives encountered violence and other forms of intimidation and, at first, they made only a small amount of progress. Efforts were increased in Mississippi, Louisiana, South Carolina, and Florida in 1963. While enormous opposition was encountered in Mississippi and Louisiana, from both local officials and private citizens, progress was made in South Carolina and Florida. The entire effort increased substantially the number of Southern blacks who were registered to vote.

The Birmingham riot of May 1963 stimulated Kennedy to even greater efforts. Alarmed by the growing violence and the possibility of more, he now concluded that a new law could produce an orderly and just society. To promote this cause, he made a bold, powerful speech in June, calling upon whites to stop discrimination. He also appealed for broad civil rights legislation. His proposed law had several important features, including desegregation of public accommodations, authority for the Justice Department to support efforts to desegregate schools, and authority for the federal government to withhold federal funds from certain types of segregated facilities. Following his plea for action, he worked hard to build support for the proposal. His efforts included a series of White House conferences with several thousand church and business leaders.

Despite the size of his effort, success eluded Kennedy. His proposal had solid administration backing and strong public support, and it made some progress in Congress. While it moved close to passage in the House, it encountered strong opposition in the Senate, with Senator Eastland of Mississippi bottling up the bill in the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Kennedy's accomplishments were few, and several explanations have been offered as justification. Critics see inadequacies in his leadership, especially lack of boldness and skill. Admirers stress the toughness of his situation, including the resistance to change from powerful business leaders, congressmen, and bureaucrats.

Admirers also emphasize that his time was cut short. "He had so little time," Arthur Schlesinger wrote. "It was as if Jackson had died before the nullification controversy and the Bank War, as if Lincoln had been killed six months after Gettysburg or Franklin Roosevelt at the end of 1935 or Truman before the Marshall Plan." Countering this argument is evidence indicating

that Kennedy's popularity declined sharply during his last year, especially in the South. On the other hand, most of his proposals and his general tone of activism were endorsed by a majority of Americans. Even the civil rights proposal was supported by a majority of whites outside the South. Moreover, during 1963, his proposals were making progress in Congress, even though his party had lost four seats in each house in the 1962 elections. Thus, he might have accomplished more if he had been given more time.

If Kennedy's list of laws passed was short, his performance in domestic affairs was not insignificant. In some respects, he was an innovator and a pioneer. He broke with Eisenhower, reestablished the President as a reformer, strengthened support for government action, and laid the groundwork for accomplishments that would take place after his death.

Perhaps Kennedy's achievement would have been greater, inside the United States, if he had not tried to do so much outside. To accomplish more at home, Kennedy needed more time. The problem, however, was not only that he was not permitted to serve a full term. It was also that other problems consumed much of the time that he did have. And most of those were international problems.

## Chapter 12

### The Mission of America

At the same time that Kennedy tried to change life at home, he sought to enlarge American influence elsewhere. In fact, foreign policy topped his agenda. His closest adviser, Theodore Sorenson, has written, "Foreign affairs had always interested him far more than domestic. They occupied far more of his time and energy as President." Another adviser agreed: "Certainly, he thought foreign affairs were central to his concern. He used to say that a domestic failure could hurt the country, but a failure in foreign affairs could kill it." One of his arguments for change in the United States was that it would enable the country to be more effective in the world. To be "successful around the world" the nation had to be "successful here." He expressed the old American idea that the nation had a special mission in the world: "Let every nation know . . . that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty." He said the nation was obligated to be "the watchman of the walls of freedom." If it "were to falter, the world . . . would inevitably begin to move toward the Communist bloc." The mission had been imposed upon the nation "by destiny rather than by choice" and had to be conducted "with wisdom and restraint." He did exercise restraint, but his sense of mission carried the nation into a precarious position in Southeast Asia.

Kennedy accepted the containment policy that had been estab-

lished and expanded by Truman and continued and enlarged by Eisenhower. He thought in terms of a global threat and of the United States' ability to deal with it successfully. He thought in terms of power, conflict, tests of wills, the need to avoid the appearance of weakness, and the need to seem "tough." "We must not tempt them with weakness," he insisted in his inaugural address. "For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed." He believed that to succeed in the world, the United States must mobilize and use its power more fully. It should expand foreign aid, enlarge its retaliatory power, and develop its conventional forces.

Kennedy expanded and redesigned the foreign aid program. He increased the total expenditure by 25 percent, pushing it above \$5 billion, and enlarged the portion devoted to economic development. He also established a new agency—the Agency for International Development (AID)—to manage the foreign aid program and discarded the policy of providing aid only to allies. In addition, he created a Peace Corps, which took Americans and their skills into underdeveloped areas, and the Alliance for Progress, which provided American economic aid to Latin American programs of social reform and economic development.

Unlike his predecessors, the focal point of Kennedy's foreign aid program was the underdeveloped or Third World. He believed that the Third World was the main arena of competition between the United States and the USSR, and he assumed that if the area achieved self-sustaining economic growth, Communism could not succeed there. Thus, the underdeveloped nations needed both assistance from the developed nations and reforms, such as education, land, and tax reforms, that would eliminate roadblocks to modernization. According to Kennedy, the greatest roadblock was the power of privileged oligarchies that frustrated the demands of the masses for social justice.

But Kennedy's efforts to promote reform and development in the Third World ran into difficulties. Congressional opposition slashed his proposals, dropping the appropriation to \$3.2 billion for fiscal 1964, \$1.7 billion below his request and the lowest since 1958. In addition, opposition from both the left and the right in Latin America, and a decline in the administration's own interest, rendered the Alliance for Progress largely ineffective.

Kennedy depended much more heavily on military power than on foreign aid, and his ambitions in foreign affairs compelled him to develop a new military policy that became known as the McNamara strategy of flexible response. Several sources contributed to the new policy. One was the constitutional principle of the subordination of the military; NSC-68 and American military policy during the Korean War were other sources. Criticism of Eisenhower's policies, especially the emphases on air power and budgetary limitations, were additional factors. The theories of Dean Acheson, Maxwell Taylor, James Gavin, Matthew Ridgway, Walt Rostow, Henry Kissinger, and others—including Kennedy while he was a senator and a campaigner—were incorporated into the strategy. Kennedy had argued that Eisenhower's policies gave the United States only two alternatives—all-out nuclear war or surrender. He now appointed several of his fellow critics to office, including Taylor and Rostow.

Modern management practices also played a role in the new strategy. They involved systems analysis, cost effectiveness, and long-range forecasting and were applied by the new Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara, a recruit from the auto industry. Although McNamara was not an engineer, a car maker, or a salesman, he was an expert in organization, and he represented a new type of business leader. Educated at the Harvard Business School, which emphasized scientific management, he had an opportunity to apply those techniques as an air force officer during World War II. After the war, he worked at Ford and had become president of the firm in 1960. He was convinced that by subjecting any enterprise to rigorous analysis it could be brought under control.

Selected because of his reputation as a manager, McNamara accepted a cabinet post despite the financial sacrifice involved. He was attracted by the challenge of managing an organization that had more than 3.5 million employees, consumed over 50 percent of the federal budget and nearly 10 percent of the gross national product, and was centered in the largest office building in the world. Kennedy's assurances of strong support, as well as the strengthening of the Secretary of Defense in the late 1950s, also attracted him.

McNamara assumed that managerial principles could be used to evaluate military spending proposals. He held that the military was not as efficient as big business, but, he believed, it



could become more efficient if it adopted the newest techniques of the corporate world. Confident that the United States could "spend whatever it needs to spend on national security," he believed that the government must apply "strict standards of effectiveness and efficiency to the way we spend our defense dollars." His principles involved the consideration of alternatives, such as bombers versus nuclear submarines versus intercontinental ballistic missiles, and the definition of options in quantitative terms. His efforts resulted in frequent conflicts with the professionals in the armed forces and their allies in industry and Congress. Even though he had strong support from Kennedy, he was not always successful in pressing his proposals.

The strategy that McNamara championed rejected the emphasis on bombers and missiles. These weapons could not deter all types of aggression. Thus, the United States must be able to respond to a variety of challenges: large-scale nuclear war, limited nuclear war, limited war of a nonnuclear type, Communist-led revolutions, and guerrilla war. The American response should be in harmony with the challenge; it should be kept as small as possible, escalating as necessary.

The new administration was as confident as the old one had been that its strategy would hold the Communists in check. Kennedy assumed that the ability and willingness to act militarily would make military action unnecessary, or at least keep it at a low level. If the United States did not have enough military power and was not willing to use it, the Russians, the Chinese, and the revolutionaries they controlled would surely act. But an adequate supply of American power and a clearly recognized willingness to use it would hold them back.

The strategy implied the principle of civilian supremacy. McNamara and his associates looked upon the military as an instrument to be used as political leaders determined. This principle was a basis of all McNamara's operations as Secretary of Defense, including his efforts to reduce the military's propaganda activities; it frequently brought him into conflict with the military and its allies in Congress.

McNamara's strategy guided the development of the armed forces. The defense budget was pushed from less than \$46 billion in 1960 to more than \$55 billion in 1963. Officials quickly learned that Kennedy and others had been wrong in charging that a "missile gap" existed, for the Russians had not moved

forward as rapidly as had been expected. Nevertheless, the administration substantially increased the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles and the number of nuclear-powered, missile-firing submarines; it also increased the number of bombers kept in the air. The new administration was determined to have enough strength to be able to retaliate successfully if a massive surprise attack occurred. By 1963, McNamara was confident that the strategic force of the United States could "completely destroy . . . the Soviet Union as a civilized nation."

The redesign of the armed forces involved an increase in the size and capability of the army, which was enlarged from eleven to sixteen divisions.

Washington also tried to encourage its European allies to increase their spending on conventional, nonnuclear forces but did



*Kennedy with Two Advisers: General Maxwell Taylor and Secretary Robert McNamara (U.S. Navy Photo)*

not do so successfully. Similarly, other efforts to develop greater unity in the Western alliance were also unsuccessful. American and European officials clashed frequently over military policy. The Europeans, especially Charles DeGaulle of France, were less willing than they had been earlier to follow the American lead and adopt American ideas. Economic recovery had renewed European self-confidence.

Related to the expansion of the armed forces was the administration's substantial development of space exploration, which was expanded into a program costing more than \$5 billion per year. Aimed chiefly at landing Americans on the moon before the end of the decade, the program was influenced more by political than by scientific considerations. As the Director of NASA, James L. Webb, explained:

With a billion people already allied against us, and the uncommitted and the emerging nations weighing events that will affect their own future welfare, the United States must present the image of a can-do nation, with which they can confidently align their futures.

Whatever the impact on other nations, the development of the space program, the military establishment, and the McNamara strategy gave the administration a sense that it could act effectively wherever trouble flared up. And, indeed, trouble did occur—in Cuba and Berlin.

During the first months of Kennedy's presidency, the United States backed an unsuccessful invasion of Cuba. Kennedy hoped to overthrow Castro, convinced that he was "a clear and present danger to the authentic and autonomous revolution of the Americas." He had a CIA-trained force available to him; the CIA and the military chiefs, convinced that the Cuban ruler was unpopular in his own country, assured the President that an invasion would succeed for it would trigger an uprising. But the invasion, made in April 1961, was a complete and humiliating failure. The Cubans did not rebel, and the United States did not supply large-scale support. A few American planes and pilots participated, but Kennedy rejected advice from the CIA and the military for a major American military effort after the invaders ran into trouble. The experience, however, helped Kennedy realize that his power had limits. But it also strengthened his conviction that he must not appear to be weak. "Why couldn't this have happened to James Bond?" a troubled Kennedy quipped.

In 1961, Berlin also supplied dramatic moments. Kennedy and the Russian leader, Nikita Khrushchev, clashed verbally in June over Russian support for "wars of national liberation" and over the American presence in Berlin. The Russians followed the clash with new demands for change. The Americans reaffirmed their determination to stay in the city, and both sides strengthened their armed forces. Suddenly, in August, the Russians constructed a wall dividing east Berlin from west Berlin, so that they could check the flow of people from east to west. Kennedy responded rather as Eisenhower had to the crushing of the Hungarian uprising. He enlarged American forces in Berlin, but, restrained by fear of provoking war, he relied chiefly on words to express his displeasure with what the Russians had done; no effort was made to dismantle the wall, which still is in place today.

In October 1962, new trouble erupted—the Cuban missile crisis. It involved Russian efforts to place short- and intermediate-range missiles in Cuba. Several considerations influenced the Russians. Missiles in Cuba could increase the effectiveness of Russian missiles by increasing the number that could hit American cities. The Russians wanted to strengthen ties with the Cubans and hoped to embarrass the United States.

The political implications of the move affected Kennedy's response more than the military implications did. He felt that Khrushchev was testing the "will" of the United States and was trying to make the nation appear weak and irresolute. America's reputation as a world power seemed to be at stake. Kennedy believed that the United States could not permit such a move so close to home. If the United States did not act, Russia would surely do something more significant, such as apply new pressure on Berlin. Moreover, America's allies would be discouraged if the United States backed down. Thus, he sought to demonstrate to Russia and the world—and also to the American people—that the administration was "determined" and willing to counter Russian moves even when the risks were high.

Kennedy moved but did so cautiously. He feared nuclear war as well as a demonstration of weakness. He turned down the suggestion of the nation's ambassador to the UN, Adlai Stevenson, to rely on diplomacy and concessions. He also rejected the suggestion by the military chiefs for an air strike. Instead, he accepted the advice from Robert Kennedy, McNamara, and

others that the United States should blockade Cuba. This seemed less risky than an air strike; it would also rely on naval power, an area of American superiority.

Supplemented by preparations for an attack on Russia and Cuba and a warning to Russia, the blockade persuaded the Russians to pull back. Obviously concluding that the risks were too great to persist, Khrushchev ordered the ships carrying more missiles to Cuba to turn around, and he agreed to withdraw the missiles that had already been placed there. The Russians also asked the United States to promise not to invade Cuba, a request that Kennedy agreed to accept. During the missile crisis, Kennedy demonstrated that he could use power skillfully and cautiously, and that he could pursue carefully defined and limited objectives. In the midst of the crisis, he remarked that this was the week he earned his salary. A sign in the State Department suggested: "In a Nuclear Age nations must make war as porcupines make love—carefully."

The world's first nuclear crisis convinced Kennedy that he had to find ways of reducing the chances of nuclear war. The sense of risk and the growing evidence of the dangers of fallout from the testing of atomic weapons encouraged the American President to press for a treaty banning nuclear tests. Khrushchev's response was influenced both by his need to strengthen himself at home and his growing fear of China. In July 1963, the United States, Russia, and Great Britain signed a Nuclear Test Ban Treaty. It promised that these nations—the nuclear powers—would not test nuclear weapons in the atmosphere, outer space, and under water.

The treaty, the most significant result of Kennedy's efforts to improve relations with Russia, did not end the nuclear arms race. The document was ratified by the United States Senate, in September, even though extreme conservatives in the United States, such as Robert Welch, some scientists, including Edward Teller, the leader in the development of the hydrogen bomb, and many military leaders campaigned against it. Many nations endorsed it. The signatories, however, could continue to conduct underground tests, and the French and the Chinese, the two nations most interested in developing nuclear weapons, refused to sign.

Kennedy actually stimulated the arms race more than he reduced it. His success in the missile crisis, moreover, strengthened

his confidence in American power and in his own skill in using it. His Vietnam policy turned out to be the most significant expression of that confidence.

In Vietnam, Kennedy accepted Eisenhower's commitment to the Diem regime. He regarded Vietnam as a vital area, and the struggle there as one that had more than local significance. Endorsing what has been called "the domino theory," he believed that developments in South Vietnam would influence situations elsewhere. The worldwide balance of power was involved. A Viet Cong victory would mean Communist control of all Vietnam. It would also lead to Communist victories in Cambodia and Laos. The situations in Thailand, Burma, Pakistan, India, Malaya, and Indonesia would become precarious, and Communist revolutionaries in more remote areas would also be encouraged to employ Viet Cong tactics. A Diem victory, on the other hand, would strengthen anti-Communists everywhere.

To Kennedy, Vietnam seemed to be a test, as Korea had been a test for Truman. Kennedy did recognize nonmilitary dimensions in the conflict that was growing in intensity in South Vietnam, but he did not emphasize them. Some of his advisers, recognizing the limited popularity of the Diem regime, its small efforts to develop support, and the need for economic development, insisted that Diem must make reforms in order to become stronger and more effective. But Kennedy stepped up pressure for reform and development only briefly. The Americans did not apply much pressure for they could see no alternative to Diem. Heading a corrupt, repressive, and incompetent regime, he did not gain popular support.

Kennedy's most influential advisers encouraged him to view the military problem as basic. The Department of Defense, the most influential bloc in the administration, pressed this point of view. So did the Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, a man heavily influenced by the lessons of the 1930s. Moreover, the White House staff did not challenge the Defense and State departments' position. As the Viet Cong increased their warfare, nearly all the President's advisers argued that Vietnam was basically a military problem demanding the application of American military power. In addition to McNamara and Rusk, Vice-President Lyndon Johnson, General Taylor, and Presidential Assistant Walt Rostow, among others, persuaded Kennedy that he should apply the McNamara strategy.

Thus, Kennedy enlarged American military operations in Vietnam. Eisenhower had stationed about 650 troops there to serve as advisers, and now Kennedy concluded that his predecessor's methods, although not his objective, were faulty. He had not used enough American troops, and he had not paid enough attention to guerrilla warfare. Thus, Kennedy added at least 16,000 troops. Troops were available, including a new group of special forces, the "Green Berets." And Kennedy had a theory to guide them. The Americans emphasized advice and training, including training for guerrilla warfare, but they also engaged in combat and many intelligence operations. In addition to troops, the United States sent dollars and supplies, and Kennedy brushed aside signals from the revolutionaries, the National Liberation Front (NLF), for a negotiated settlement, for he was not willing to allow the NLF a role in the government of South Vietnam.

Kennedy hoped and expected to keep the American role a secondary one. He rejected proposals to give American troops a large role in the fighting. He refused to allow them to move against North Vietnam in order to check the movement of men and supplies into the South, and he insisted that the South Vietnamese must remain chiefly responsible for the fighting. "In the final analysis it is their war," he insisted in September 1963. "They are the ones who have to win or lose it. We can help them, we can give them equipment, we can send our men out there as advisers, but they have to win it, the people of Vietnam, against the Communists."

Kennedy had confidence that American help would enable "the people of Vietnam" to defeat "the Communists," and he remained confident even though the Viet Cong continued to advance. Rejecting critical appraisals made by journalists and the CIA, he embraced the optimistic estimates of administration officials and American military officers. They were encouraged by tables comparing South Vietnamese and Viet Cong casualties. "Every quantitative measure we have shows we are winning the war," McNamara proclaimed, and the President assured the people that "the spearpoint of aggression has been blunted in South Vietnam."

The situation in Vietnam did not support these interpretations, however. During 1963, the situation deteriorated. In addition to Viet Cong military victories, there were numerous

demonstrations by militant Buddhists against repression by the Diem regime. The Americans renewed their pressure for reform and more effective military operations, but they failed. They then encouraged a military coup, which took place at the beginning of November, that resulted in Diem's overthrow and death. Dissatisfied with the regime, the administration hoped that a new one would be more effective.

In significantly enlarging the American role in Vietnam, Kennedy was influenced by the same interpretation of history that had affected the thinking of the Truman administration. He had, after all, been the author of an antiappeasement book, *Why England Slept*, written when he was a young man before the United States entered World War II. Moreover, he had fought in that war. He was also influenced by the theory that the United States had a special mission in the world. While he tried to limit the American role in Vietnam, he was determined to succeed there. He was comforted by the assumption that the nation could do so without major sacrifices.

Kennedy had not discarded the theory that there were limits on American power. "We must face the fact that the United States is neither omnipotent nor omniscient," he announced in 1961. The United States had "only 6 percent of the world's population" and could not impose its will "upon the other 94 percent of mankind" and "right every wrong or reverse each adversity." There was not "an American solution to every world problem." A year later he explained: "There is a limitation upon the ability of the United States . . . to bring about solutions." White House experience, such as his failure to topple Castro, had taught him that there were "greater limitations" upon American ability than he had "imagined." Thus, he rejected advice to send American troops into Laos and American fighter pilots and planes into the Congo, for he hoped to avoid confrontations with Russia in those areas.

Nevertheless, Kennedy did expect a great deal from the nation. "We can't make the world over, but we can influence the world," he asserted in 1963. He was convinced that the United States must attempt to influence developments in distant areas, such as South Vietnam, and must not grow impatient and withdraw, thereby making life "easy for Communists." He enlarged the instruments of American policy, especially American military power, and he increased American activity in the world. If



he should be given credit for domestic accomplishments that came after his death, his contributions to later developments in Vietnam must also be recognized. Restrained by awareness of limits to his power, he was also influenced by his conviction that America had a mission in the world. Killed by an assassin's bullets on November 22, 1963, he was not forced to choose between the course of caution and the pursuit of mission in Vietnam.

## Chapter 13

### The Great Society and the Global Power

With Lyndon Baines Johnson in the White House, an ambitious theory of American power dominated the thinking of the President. While he did not expect to destroy Communist power, he sought to make the United States both a "Great Society" and a global power. Johnson believed that America was capable of both controlling events in many parts of the world and solving problems at home.

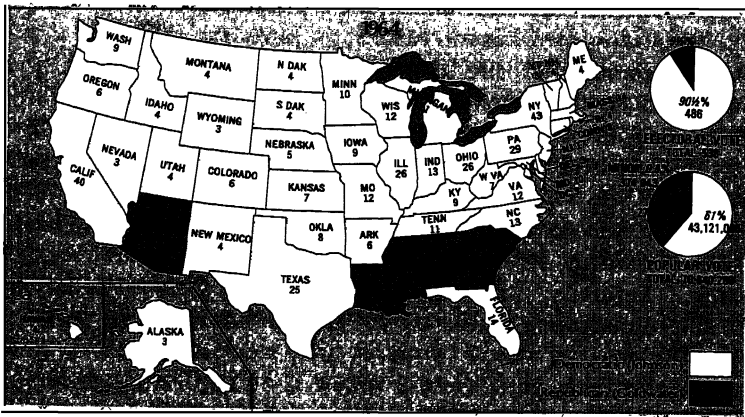
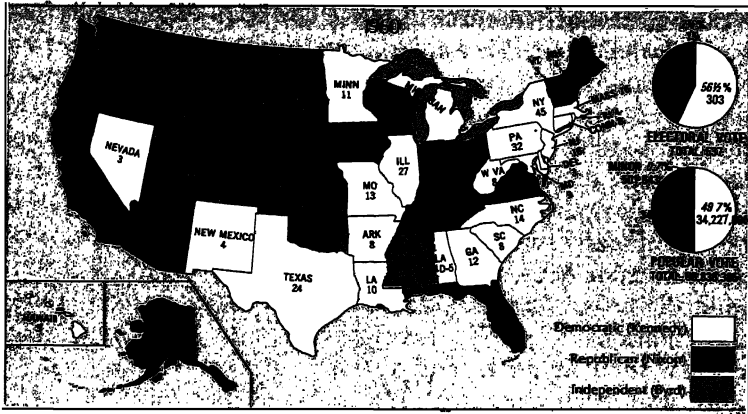
Elevated unexpectedly to the presidency, Johnson intended to use the powers that he had acquired. In the past, he had been acutely conscious that his power was limited. In the 1950s, he had only been the leader in the Senate and aware that above him was the President. Then, in the early 1960s, he had been forced to rely upon the feeble powers of the vice-presidency. Now, he was at the top of the American power structure. Once a disciple of Franklin Roosevelt, Johnson believed in the strong, active President, and he was determined to be that type. Never before had he felt so strong.

The new President was especially eager to use his power for domestic purposes. Having begun his congressional service in New Deal days, he believed in the New Deal approach, with its heavy emphasis and confidence in the central government. Outlining his hopes for a Great Society, in May 1964, he assured the American people that "we have the power to shape the civilization that we want."

During the early months in office, Johnson enjoyed a series of spectacular victories. He had acquired unusually rich experience in Washington, and now he moved from triumph to triumph in domestic affairs, proving that he was one of the most active and skillful Presidents in American history. Influenced by a desire to prove himself to doubters, as well as to indicate his own interest in reform, he quickly obtained passage of Kennedy's major domestic proposals. In February 1964, the Senate finally passed the Tax Reduction Act—and by a wide margin: 77 to 21. It also legislated the broad Civil Rights Act that attacked segregation and discrimination in public accommodations, in various public facilities, such as parks and schools, in federally assisted programs, and in employment. The victories that had been denied Kennedy had been obtained by Johnson.

Johnson also assumed Kennedy's plans for a "war" on poverty. He announced his intentions, in January 1964, and quickly obtained passage of the Economic Opportunity Act. The act established an Office of Economic Opportunity, created several different types of programs, including a Job Corps, Head Start, and VISTA, and attempted to coordinate "community action" programs. The "war" was small at first, with a budget of \$1 billion, but it was expected to grow as experience accumulated.

In achieving his victories, Johnson owed much to other people. Kennedy had made significant preparations, and Johnson consciously built upon them, announcing from the beginning that he would continue his predecessor's policies. The assassination also generated a mood that facilitated passage of the fallen leader's proposals, and Johnson often appealed to that mood. In addition, his success owed much to the militant civil rights movement, which was now quite broad and extremely active in Washington itself. Clergymen were especially effective lobbyists on this issue. He was helped by scholars and publicists, Michael Harrington among them, who called attention to problems in American life, such as poverty. Labor's lobbyists also contributed to each victory. But Johnson made his own large contributions. Determined to provide leadership for the legislative process, he worked with congressional leaders, such as Senator Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota, an active liberal Democrat, and Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois, the more conservative Republican leader in the Senate. Accustomed to pressuring congressmen, he continued to do so, even though he



### *Bases of Democratic Power: The Presidential Elections of 1960 and 1964*

was no longer a member of the legislative body. He also used his highly developed skill of compromise. For example, to obtain passage of the Tax Reduction Act, he promised to keep expenditures for fiscal 1965 below the \$98 billion figure estimated for 1964. And he relied much more heavily upon oratory than he had in the past. In his speeches, he appealed beyond the congressmen to the people, in order to influence the political situation through public opinion.

Helped by others, Johnson broke the deadlock that had plagued liberal leaders since the late 1930s. The conservative coalition that had been effective for so long broke down under the pressures of 1963-1964. Most Republicans joined with Northern and Western Democrats to pass the civil rights legislation, while Southern Democrats supported the war on poverty.

After enjoying these satisfying legislative victories, Johnson moved on to a spectacular election triumph in November. He hoped for a landslide that would demonstrate the great affection people had for him; he wanted to prove that he had a right to rule and to obtain a base for additional accomplishments. Indeed, he enjoyed such a victory, gaining more than 61 percent of the popular vote. Astonishingly, his percentage was greater than Roosevelt's in 1936 or Eisenhower's in 1956.

Johnson's victory owed much to his own accomplishments as President. Once regarded as a Southerner, his record demonstrated that he had become a national figure. Immediately after becoming President he had proved that he, a man from Texas who had once opposed civil rights legislation, now endorsed it without reservation. Long distrusted by liberals, labor, and blacks, he tried to unite those groups behind him. And by selecting Hubert Humphrey as his running mate, he added to his strength with these groups.

Johnson was also helped by the Republican party, which nominated a conservative for the presidency. This reflected a revival on the right that had been underway for several years. Discontented with both foreign and domestic policies, and inclined to blame them on disloyal or at least misguided Americans, the right called for a sharp break with the past, urging the defeat and destruction of Communist power and influence in the world.

The return of the Democrats to power had stimulated the revival. Conservative Republican congressmen, for example, had gained a new sense of freedom. They expressed themselves more boldly now that they faced a Democratic President who could not appeal to party loyalty in order to get them to support proposals they did not like.

Eisenhower's failures had also contributed to the revival. He had been unable to build a strong party and could not destroy Democratic programs and policies. Conservative Republicans believed that their party should behave in ways that differed significantly from Democratic ways, and they found Eisenhower's

performance far from satisfactory. On the far right, he was denounced as "a dedicated, conscious agent of the Communist conspiracy." In the 1964 election, discontented Republicans hoped to provide "a choice, not an echo."

A new "backlash" against civil rights also stimulated the right. By 1964, a strong segregationist, Governor George Wallace of Alabama, gained surprising support in the presidential primaries in Maryland, Wisconsin, and Indiana. Some members of the old Roosevelt coalition who had benefited from the prosperity of recent years rallied behind this foe of the civil rights movement, for they believed their jobs, their homes, their schools, their social life, and their social status were threatened by the black advance. A new political coalition seemed to be taking shape. It was nationwide in scope, white in color, and united in opposition to the civil rights movement. It combined groups that had previously clashed on such issues as the labor movement but now agreed on the preservation of the "neighborhood school," the superiority of the white race, and related questions.

In the 1960s, the right differed in some ways from its counterpart in the era of Robert Taft and Joseph McCarthy. Businessmen, resentful of the power of big government and big labor, continued to form an important component. But the movement now depended less upon Catholics, more upon Protestants, and was much more critical of blacks. Military men played a larger role in the new right, resenting the power of civilians in military affairs and expressing hostility toward many national policies. New organizations, such as the John Birch Society, the White Citizens Councils, the Christian Anti-Communism Crusade, and the Minutemen, had also developed since the early 1950s.

Several themes frequently appeared in the speeches and writings of the men and women on the right. They argued that the moral fiber of the nation was breaking down. This was reflected in foreign and domestic policies as well as in topless bathing suits for women and new dance styles. The dangers of big government continued to be a major theme. Big government destroyed individual freedom. Government interference in economic matters and government spending and taxing needed to be reduced substantially, and new proposals, such as federal aid to education and medical insurance, had to be defeated.

The old conspiracy theory flourished once again. Some men of the right saw Communists and their sympathizers exerting

great influence on the American government, including the State Department and the Supreme Court, on other institutions, such as the church, the press, the schools, the unions, and in the civil rights movement. One extremist version of conspiracy explained the assassination of President Kennedy. According to the theory, he had performed many services for the conspiracy, but he had fallen behind in a schedule for the "effective capture of the United States by 1963" and had become "a political liability." Thus, one of the conspirators had killed him. The leader of the John Birch Society, Robert Welch, a major proponent of the Communist version of the conspiracy theory, suggested that Chief Justice Warren, one of the right's leading targets, had been nominated by the Communists for the job of investigating the assassination so that their role in it would not be revealed.

A vision of Communist progress appeared frequently in conservative thought. Accordingly, Communism had been gaining, and was continuing to gain power and influence throughout the world. This vision had profound implications for foreign policy. It meant that negotiation or coexistence with the Communists was impossible. According to Democratic Senator Thomas J. Dodd of Connecticut: "the only alternative to total defeat in the struggle with Communism is total victory." Even efforts to increase trade between the United States and Communist countries was opposed on the ground that it strengthened Communism. Only a "tough" policy could prevent a Communist victory. Thus, some conservatives entertained thoughts of a preventive war or a "first strike" by the United States. All believed that the United States had been too weak in the past, and all admired "tough" men like MacArthur and McCarthy. Similarly, they regarded existing American policies as too weak.

From 1960 to 1964, the right gained strength. Working quietly and effectively, conservatives achieved power in the Republican party, especially on the local and state levels in the Far West, the Middle West, and the South. By election year, most Republicans, including most Republican congressmen and almost all state and local party officials, regarded themselves as conservatives. On the far right, the John Birch Society, the largest and wealthiest group of its kind, was represented by more than 100 delegates at the Republican National Convention.

The Republican right rallied behind Senator Barry Goldwater

of Arizona. He had achieved widespread support by the fall of 1963, and many then looked forward to a clear-cut battle between the Western conservative and the Eastern liberal. Kennedy's assassination and his replacement by a Texan weakened Goldwater somewhat, although he maintained great strength in his party.

The conservative revival was chiefly responsible for Goldwater's nomination for the presidency, but the problems of other sectors within the GOP also helped. Moderates and liberals in the party supported Governor Nelson Rockefeller of New York, but his divorce and remarriage in 1963 damaged his candidacy. The uncertainty of other candidates, especially Governor William Scranton of Pennsylvania, also reduced the effectiveness of the moderates. Finally, General Eisenhower refused to help with the efforts to check the drive to nominate Goldwater.

Thus, the Goldwater forces dominated the convention. Their control was so complete and their commitment to their principles so strong that they refused to conciliate their enemies at the convention in the traditional political fashion. Rather than attempt to balance the ticket, they nominated another conservative, Congressman William Miller of New York, for the vice-presidency. Goldwater's opponents were not in a conciliatory mood either. Rockefeller and Scranton attacked the senator bitterly, picturing him as a wild man, insensitive to domestic problems, and eager for war.

Although some people on the right had doubts about Goldwater, he seemed fully satisfactory to most conservative Republicans. He offered real alternatives to established policies. The senator frequently praised the Birch Society, and he relied heavily on advice from right-wing intellectuals, especially those affiliated with the *National Review*. He urged Americans to make a sharp break with their recent past. "My aim is not to pass laws but to repeal them," he announced. He frequently criticized such major programs as Social Security and the progressive income tax, and he often talked of the moral decay of America. He argued that "the moral fiber of the American people is beset by rot and decay" because of "thirty years of an unhealthy social climate" and blamed this situation on "the philosophy of modern liberalism, the dominant philosophy of the opposition party."

Goldwater continually attacked big government. "Govern-



ment must be cut down to size or we will surely lose our free society," he insisted. "I fear Washington and centralized government more than I do Moscow," he announced. He denounced the power of the executive branch so vigorously and frequently that commentators suggested he was running against the presidency rather than for it.

Goldwater also criticized the civil rights movement. He objected to the Supreme Court decisions and opposed the Kennedy-Johnson legislative proposals, having been one of only six Republican senators to vote against them in 1964. He could find "no constitutional basis" for the exercise of federal regulatory authority over employment practices and public accommodations and believed that effective enforcement would "require the creation of a federal police force of mammoth proportions." Rather than pass civil rights legislation, he believed the government should stabilize race relations through more effective law enforcement.

Strong law enforcement was one of the important themes of Goldwater's campaign. He believed the country was experiencing an "alarming breakdown in law and order." His remedy for this breakdown, however, was more, not less, government.

A general in the air force reserve, Goldwater devoted a great deal of attention to American foreign policy, which he condemned as weak. He maintained that the nation's affairs were "in *shambles* from one end of the world to the other." Recent history was dominated by "defeats" for the United States, and Communism had been "gobbling up one country after another." The nation's traditional tendency to move from victory to victory had been broken, and the change resulted from the power of foolish and incompetent men. "Every time we have stood up to the Communists they have backed down," he insisted. "Our trouble is that we have not stood up to them enough."

Impatient with negotiation and compromise, Goldwater was determined to do away with uncertainty and ambiguity. He rejected disarmament schemes and proposals to abandon nuclear testing and to trade with Communist countries. He was convinced that some bold, forceful move would solve international problems. He believed that bombing was the solution to many problems facing the nation. He would, for example, authorize the air force to bomb North Vietnam. He also proposed an invasion of Cuba. The nation, he maintained, was "in

conflict with an enemy of enormous power whose undisguised aim is to conquer the United States and enslave the world." In such a struggle "there is no substitute for victory." Victory, not containment and coexistence, should be the American goal.

Goldwater's nomination was a victory for the conservative wing of the Republican party after years of defeat in presidential politics. Much more colorful than Robert Taft, the Arizona Republican had accomplished what Taft had failed to achieve. For years, conservatives had been claiming that most Americans opposed national policies, and that the Republican party should not continue to nominate as presidential candidates men who endorsed them. Too much attention had been paid in an effort to woo Easterners; a better strategy was to seek support in the West and South to supplement established Republican strength in the Middle West. According to the conservative analysis, Republican weaknesses resulted from the party's failure to distinguish itself sharply from the Democrats. Now, the GOP had decided to test the theory.

Johnson contributed to his own victory by campaigning vigorously, identifying with both the desires for stability and the desires for change. He took advantage of the fears that his opponent aroused, charging that Goldwater would destroy popular programs and lead the nation into war. Johnson maintained that he was very different from Goldwater, and he called for "a victory for the broad center of American life and experience."

In foreign affairs, the President presented himself as an advocate of cautious, restrained firmness. He had long supported an ambitious foreign policy. He came to the presidency with strong convictions about the dangers of Communism, the value of containment, and the importance of honoring the worldwide commitments that his predecessors had made. He had especially firm convictions about the importance of the American presence in Asia and was determined to prevent Southeast Asia from becoming another China.

At the same time, Johnson hoped to be able to devote more attention to domestic affairs than had any of his predecessors since the 1930s. He had a strong interest in domestic problems and believed that most people were tired of the heavy emphasis on foreign affairs. The Test Ban Treaty seemed to suggest that a period of better international relations was taking shape. He

talked of improving relations with Russia and building "bridges across the gulf which separates us from Eastern Europe." In addition, he cut military spending by several billion dollars.

During 1964, Johnson focused on the dangers involved in Goldwater's demands for greater use of military power, especially in Vietnam. His opponent was, he charged, "eager to enlarge the conflict." He promised to be "very cautious and careful," for "dropping bombs" was "likely to involve American boys in a war in Asia with 700,000 Chinese." His statements ranged from cautious suggestions that "for the moment I have not thought that we were ready for American boys to do the fighting for Asian boys" to assurances that he was "not going to send American boys nine or ten thousand miles away to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves." He talked much as Kennedy had.

Behind the scenes, however, the administration was growing increasingly alarmed about the situation in South Vietnam. Some officials, including the military chiefs, were, in fact, giving serious consideration to bombing North Vietnam and sending American troops into combat in South Vietnam. Johnson, however, did not endorse these suggestions, at least in their more ambitious forms.

However, the President did engage in several displays of strength during 1964. He enlarged the American force in South Vietnam, giving testimony to his serious concern about the area, and he authorized the first heavy bombing raids against North Vietnam, in August. The bombing followed a clash between American and North Vietnamese naval forces in the Gulf of Tonkin and led to a congressional resolution supporting Johnson's action: "the Congress approves and supports the determination of the President, as Commander in Chief, to take all necessary measures to repel any armed attack against the forces of the United States and to prevent further aggression." Johnson argued that the resolution would "give convincing evidence to the aggressive Communist nations, and to the world as a whole, that our policy in Southeast Asia will be carried forward—and that the peace and security of the area will be preserved." No members of the House voted against the resolution and only two senators did so—Ernest Gruening of Alaska and Wayne Morse of Oregon. Morse argued that the United States as well as North

Vietnam was a "provocateur" in Vietnam and had violated the Geneva agreements. He maintained that the nation was seeking "to impose a military solution upon a political and economic problem" and that the resolution would feed "the trend toward Government by executive supremacy." The Senate leader who had been working on behalf of the administration, J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, agreed that the resolution gave the President "advance authority to take whatever action he may deem necessary respecting South Vietnam and its defense," including "such actions as would lead into war."

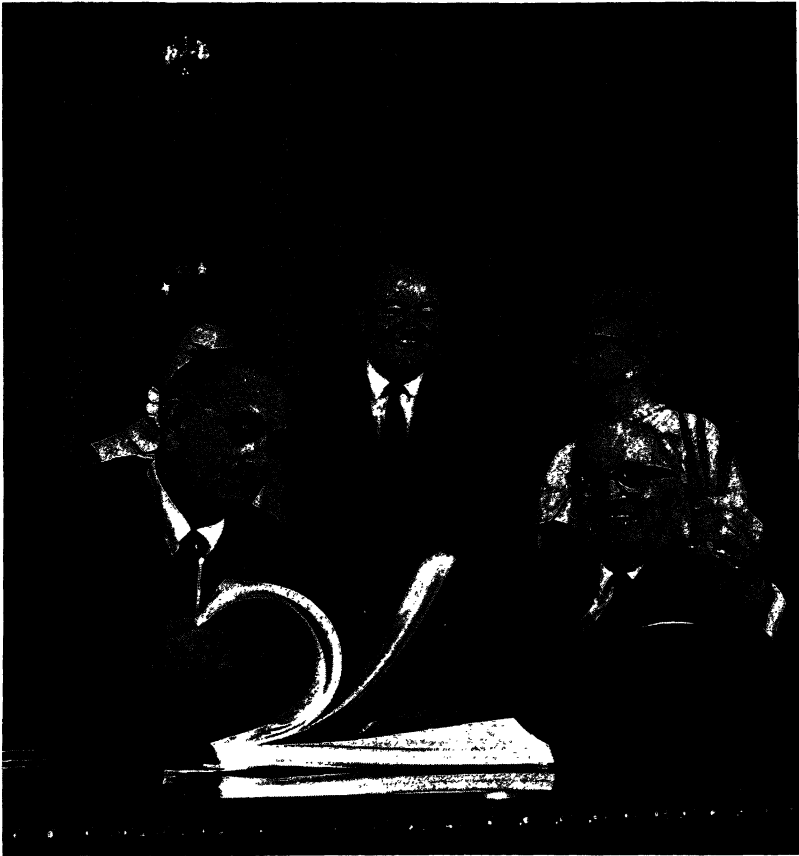
On election day, Johnson united most of the nation behind him. He carried almost all the areas that had voted for Roosevelt and Truman. Support from black America was especially impressive. Johnson obtained more than 90 percent of the black vote, and because of the strenuous registration drives that Kennedy had promoted, the turnout was the largest ever. By election day, 44 percent of adult Southern blacks had registered. Black votes enabled Johnson to carry Virginia, Florida, Tennessee, and Arkansas and helped him win by large margins in other states. Furthermore, many traditionally Republican business leaders, newspapers, and suburbs also supported Johnson. Only Goldwater's home state of Arizona and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi—states in which the black vote remained small—failed to endorse the President. The revival of the right had been contained, and the theory of the conservative majority had been discredited.

The election suggested that Johnson had the people behind him, and it provided a strong base for additional victories. It strengthened his position in Congress, where the Democrats maintained their large majority, 67 members, in the Senate and increased their majority in the House by gaining 37 seats. The Democrats now had 295 representatives out of 435. Furthermore, the congressional elections weakened the conservative bloc in the House and strengthened the liberals. That body had been closely divided in 1964, and the more controversial domestic issues had been stalemated. Now, with a majority ready to vote for liberal programs, proposals that had been gaining strength for several years seemed certain to be ratified.

Johnson was prepared to make substantial changes. During 1964, he had organized a series of task forces to give meaning to

his Great Society concept. They now supplied him with drafts of bills and messages.

In 1965, the President obtained more meaningful domestic legislation than any President had since 1935. Congress established "Medicare," a system of health insurance for the elderly under Social Security, a Department of Housing and Urban Development, and federal aid for primary and secondary schools. The lawmakers re-enacted the Economic Opportunity Act, passed several measures reflecting a rising concern about pollution of the physical environment, and enacted new



*The Evolution of a Liberal Victory: LBJ Signs Medicare (Y. R. Okamoto, Johnson Library)*

immigration legislation that overturned the discriminatory program of the past. They also passed another civil rights law strengthening safeguards for voting rights.

The President again accomplished these goals with the help of others. His new victories were based on efforts that extended back to the 1950s and beyond. Appropriately, he journeyed to Independence, Missouri, and signed the Medicare bill in the Truman Library, with Harry Truman looking on. Johnson received help from liberal groups that pressed for Medicare and other measures, and were able to defeat the American Medical Association and other rivals. The civil rights movement continued to apply pressure. King, for example, led major voting rights demonstrations in Selma, Alabama, where only a few blacks were registered to vote; in nearby Lowndes County, no blacks were registered. Officials employed forceful police actions against the demonstrators, but the outcome was another victory for the nonviolent civil rights movement.

Not since the New Deal had a President been such a successful reformer. The situation was favorable. Johnson's triumphs were, in a sense, triumphs for the liberal and civil rights movements, and the victories benefited from Truman's and Kennedy's preparations. But Johnson was a skillful President, capable of exploiting a situation.

While achieving domestic victories, Johnson stepped up his efforts to control events abroad, especially in Vietnam. During 1965, this dynamic leader of a confident people escalated the war there and shifted the major burden of the anti-Communist military effort to American fighting men. Not eager to make these decisions, he moved slowly and reluctantly toward them, fearing that the resources consumed by Vietnam would limit what he could do, and wanted to do, at home.

But Johnson was influenced by the deteriorating situation in Vietnam. The overthrow of Diem had not led to the establishment of a strong regime in South Vietnam, and the Viet Cong, aided by small but growing support from North Vietnam, enlarged their efforts. By the beginning of 1965, the South Vietnamese forces and the Saigon regime were growing weaker, and the Viet Cong appeared to be moving toward victory.

Kennedy's advisers also influenced the President. He had kept the top figures from the Kennedy administration, including McNamara, Rusk, Rostow, Taylor, and MacGeorge Bundy, and

he relied upon them even more heavily than Kennedy had. He recognized the contrast between their backgrounds and his. Moreover, he shared their lack of confidence in his ability in foreign affairs, which encouraged them to feel he was dependent on them and encouraged him to avoid any appearance of weakness. They did believe, however, that he knew how to get things done. In giving advice, they stressed the importance of the war, portraying it as a test of America's ability to combat "wars of national liberation" and warning that if the anti-Communist effort failed in Vietnam, Communists elsewhere would be encouraged to strike. Johnson's advisers also expressed confidence that the economy could support the costs of war. They also assumed that, once escalation began, the North Vietnamese would quickly pull back in order to avoid further damage from United States military power. The new American commander in South Vietnam, General William Westmoreland, appointed by Johnson in June 1964, had confidence in what American forces could do. George Ball, the Undersecretary of State, who doubted that escalation would work, had no important allies in the administration.

Johnson was also affected by his own sense of responsibility. He had learned the "lessons" of the 1930s, and he commented frequently that he was determined not to "lose" Vietnam as Truman had lost China. Furthermore, by 1965, Johnson had a sense of great personal and national power. He had a large and complex military machine with seemingly great capabilities and a theory to guide its use. That machine was supported by an economy that was growing rapidly; it was stimulated by government action rather than harmed by it. In addition, the people and Congress seemed to be solidly behind him: they accepted the cold war point of view about the dangers of Communism and American responsibilities. Congress, after all, had passed the Tonkin Gulf Resolution in August, and the people had endorsed him in November, both by wide margins. Furthermore, the enemy was, in his view, only a "raggedy-ass little fourth-rate country," and it was led by a man similar to those that he dealt with successfully in Washington. Surely, North Vietnam could not stand against a first-rate nation, and the application of a specified amount of power would quickly bring Ho Chi Minh into line. Equally certain, the United States could not permit North Vietnam to humiliate it.

In the end, a sense of great responsibility and power overwhelmed Johnson's doubts, and, during the first half of 1965, he escalated and "Americanized" the war in a series of decisions. The process began in February, as American planes began to bomb North Vietnam regularly, and in the weeks and months that followed the United States increased the number of sorties and targets. When the leaders discovered that bombing alone could not produce the desired results, the President decided to enlarge American ground operations. In May, there were 35,000 American troops in South Vietnam, and by the end of the year, the number had jumped above 180,000. By then, the American forces were responsible for most of the offensive action against the Viet Cong and their allies.

Johnson had taken the steps against which he had warned in 1964, but he was convinced that he had no acceptable alternative. "We did not choose to be the guardians at the gate, but there is no one else," he insisted. "We are there because we have a promise to keep." He maintained that the "future of Southeast Asia as a whole" was at stake, and that the war was a "struggle for freedom on every front of human activity." He stressed the role of North Vietnam, suggested that China had a big influence in that nation, and insisted that the United States was obligated to "bring about the end of Communist subversion and aggression in the area." If it pulled out, other nations would lose confidence in the United States, and potential aggressors elsewhere would be encouraged. Greater instability and wider war would result. Thus, the United States had to use containment in Vietnam, as it had elsewhere. For a man who had experienced the 1930s and 1940s, the "lessons of history" seemed clear.

While he was escalating American activities in Vietnam, Johnson used military force in a revolution in the Western Hemisphere. In the Dominican Republic, the elected President, Juan Bosch, a non-Communist social democrat, had been deposed in 1963. Now, in the spring of 1965, revolutionaries sought to restore him to power. Johnson quickly intervened with 20,000 troops. Initially, he argued that his purpose was to save the lives of Americans and other foreigners living in the Dominican Republic, but he soon revealed that another motive exerted a greater influence. He was determined to prevent "another Cuba." That is, he feared that Communists would gain control of the revolution and establish another Communist government



in the Caribbean. In his view, that would be intolerable. Lacking confidence in Bosch, and convinced that the small group of Communists in the Dominican Republic could seize control, he believed that only American military intervention could prevent a Communist takeover. The other nations in the hemisphere should intervene in a revolutionary situation, he maintained, "only—repeat only—when the object is the establishment of a Communist dictatorship." He indicated that the people of the Dominican Republic were free to set up any kind of government but a Communist government.

Johnson did not intervene in every trouble spot around the world in 1965, but he did define the American role in global terms. He intervened in explosive situations on two sides of the globe and insisted that the United States would do whatever was necessary

to see that peace is restored, that the people of not only the Dominican Republic but South Vietnam have the right of self-determination and that they cannot be gobbled up in the 20th century and swallowed just because they happen to be smaller than some of those whose boundaries adjoin them. . . . [There are] a hundred other little nations sitting here this moment watching what happens.

Johnson did not think in only military terms, but he relied very heavily upon military power. He worked for peaceful solutions to several international problems, and he called for a negotiated settlement of the Vietnam War, promising large-scale American participation in a program of economic development for all Vietnam. But appropriations for the foreign aid program continued to decline, while military spending moved up once again. Clearly, the containment policy had become global in scope and almost entirely dependent upon military force. Johnson was using American power to promote changes at home and resist changes abroad. He was confident that the nation could create the kind of world that it desired or at least the kind that it needed.

The process of escalation and Americanization in Vietnam expressed the confidence that had been growing in the United States for a decade. By 1965, it seemed possible to create a Great Society, if not a perfect society, and, at the same time, to function effectively as a global power.



## PART IV

### TROUBLED TIMES

The confidence of 1965 soon appeared quite unrealistic. The war in Vietnam proved much more difficult than anticipated, and it contributed decisively to the growth of discontent at home. Before the end of the decade, turbulence had become a major feature of American life. In response, many Americans were searching for stability—for “law and order.” Others were trying to scale down the nation’s role in the world, convinced that improvements in the quality of life at home depended upon a retreat from “globalism.” Moreover, by the end of the sixties, the economic system had begun to function less effectively, and confidence in American leaders, especially the Presidents, had declined sharply. Troubles mounted in so many areas that frustration rather than accomplishment became the main feature of the lives of the nation’s Presidents. One declined to run again; a second resigned under fire; a third failed in a bid for the extension of his power; and a fourth failed to master public opinion and Congress to the degree that his most effective predecessors had. Troubled times for the nation and its leaders had, indeed, displaced rising confidence.

# Chapter 14

## Protest and Reaction

The second half of the 1960s was one of the most turbulent periods in American history. Society seemed to be disintegrating as people became more conscious of their group identities. Conflict accelerated and intensified. Violence erupted in the central cities and on college campuses. Social and economic problems contributed to the turbulence, but the major factor was the war in Vietnam.

Young Americans provided much of the discontent and protest. Not all of them rebelled; most did so in only mild and minor ways. Young whites who were not in college did not participate significantly in protest movements. Instead, many of them supported critics of the rebels, such as George Wallace. Most college students concentrated on studies, social life, or athletics and hoped that their education would enable them to get ahead within the system. To a large degree, the "youth movement" or "student rebellion" was composed of affluent young whites studying the liberal arts in leading institutions of higher learning. The group was a relatively small portion of the total population "under thirty," but it became increasingly prominent during the second half of the 1960s and increasingly able to mobilize a following as opposition to the war mounted on the campuses.

The students' upbringing was, in part, responsible for the rebellion. They were children of affluent parents who valued

them highly, believing that they deserved a high degree of freedom. Unlike their parents, who had been forced to work hard for material success, the young people had not experienced a depression and the triumph over it. In addition, they had been raised in a period of growing interest and support for education, reviving liberalism, and expanding concern about civil rights, and their parents at least sympathized with these developments. Finally, they were the first generation raised in the wide environment provided by television, a means of contact with realities like ghetto poverty or war in Southeast Asia.

Nurtured in such a fashion, then, the young people of the 1960s found that conditions clashed at many points with their desires. Their educational institutions were often large and impersonal and not as liberal and democratic as were their families. Their professors, often absorbed by research, publication, and consulting, seemed less interested in them than their fathers were and less stimulating than they had expected them to be. Beyond the university, life did not conform to their expectations. The situation there contained racism, poverty, and war—and young people (at least some of them) were expected to fight in the war. They were also expected to work for a large organization, perhaps a corporation, after leaving the university and the Army.

The number of people in the younger generation was another factor that influenced their behavior. Young Americans were the largest group in American history, and many more young people were in college than ever before. Less than a quarter of those aged eighteen to twenty-one had been in college in 1946, but by 1965 nearly half of the age group were there. Surely, they could change America!

One goal of the youth movement was the creation of a "counterculture" that would be freer, more idealistic, less bureaucratic, and less materialistic than the established culture. The counterculture movement was expressed in many ways, including the wearing of long hair, beards, beads, dungarees, and old army jackets. Youths experimented with drugs and sex and rejected the work ethic, the dream of success, and the growth philosophy. The extreme representatives of the counterculture, the Hippies, "dropped out" of the larger society and established urban and rural "communes."

The most widely accepted part of the youth movement was

its music. It bridged gaps in the younger generation and was applauded by many young people who rejected other sides of the movement. In the early years of the decade, the rebellion involved an interest in folk music, which featured a singer or small group of singers, guitars and banjos, democratic assumptions, and social protest. Pete Seeger, Joan Baez, Bob Dylan, and Peter, Paul, and Mary were some of the most prominent participants in folk music. They announced that "The Times They Are a Changin'," asked "Where Have All the Flowers Gone" and "When Will They Ever Learn," protested against being pressed into "Little Boxes," and promised "We Shall Overcome."

In the middle of the decade, rock music moved to the forefront of the youth scene. It owed much to black music and dance, to Elvis Presley, a white Southerner who drew heavily on black music and had first become popular in the mid-fifties, and to the "Twist" of the early sixties. A long-haired foursome from England, the Beatles, provided much of the leadership, and Dylan moved successfully to a top position in the new musical form that the Jefferson Airplane, the Rolling Stones, Jimi Hendrix, Janis Joplin, and others developed. Now, the guitars were electrically amplified, the sound was loud, and the beat was strong. The body movements of musicians and dancers were unrestrained, and the lyrics expressed many concerns and interests, including alienation, conflict between the generations, brotherly love, drugs, and sex.

Although more heavily influenced by music and television than by books, some of the discontented young people found values in the printed word. They liked Hesse, Tolkien, Brautigan, Castaneda, and Watts, among others; Mailer, Heller, and Vonnegut exerted some influence.

Signs of student discontent appeared as early as 1960 and became increasingly apparent as the decade moved along. During the early part of the decade, they could be found on some of the leading campuses, including the University of Wisconsin, the University of Chicago, and the University of California. In 1960, students demonstrated against HUAC when it held hearings in San Francisco and against the execution of Caryl Chessman at San Quentin. During the next five years, young whites from the North and West moved frequently into the South to participate in civil rights activities.

In 1962, a new organization, Students for a Democratic

Society (SDS), was formed to unite students and lead the growing movement. Tom Hayden from the University of Michigan was the leader, and in the "Port Huron Statement," the organization criticized American racism, foreign policy, poverty, and the power structure and endorsed "participatory democracy." It also endorsed nonviolence. SDS quickly became the largest protest group on college campuses. In 1963-1964, the participants moved off the campuses to educate and organize poor whites in the slums.

The first major demonstration on a college campus took place in the fall of 1964. It was the first public indication that discontent was growing among a large body of upper middle-class whites. The demonstration took place on the Berkeley campus of the University of California, an institution situated in an attractive location, housing a distinguished faculty, proud of its record of public service, and open only to students of high ability. Large and impersonal, Berkeley regulated students' social lives but gave them a high degree of political freedom. It had a tradition of political activism, and in 1964 it contained a small group of radical students who now demanded large and rapid changes in the university. Triggered by new restrictions on the use of the campus as a base for off-campus political action, the protest attracted a large number of students. It led to the formation of the Free Speech Movement and involved civil disobedience, demonstrations, and the occupation of the administration building. The police were called in; the students staged a strike; the campus debated, and restrictions were relaxed. The influence of the civil rights movement was easy to see. Students applied its direct action techniques to a different situation.

The Berkeley upheaval was a significant event. It suggested to some people that universities as well as other institutions were coercive, and that students were an oppressed class that should create a revolution for themselves and others. The experience suggested also that the campus provided good opportunities for the recruitment and training of revolutionaries.

The crisis at Berkeley erupted only a short time before the escalation and Americanization of the war in Vietnam, and those developments had a profound impact on young people. The student rebellion grew rapidly, for the war drew radical groups together, provided an important basis for cooperation



*A Campus Demonstration (Roger Mallock/Magnum)*

with nonradical groups, and produced widespread support for protest. SDS now grew in size and prominence; it also changed in other ways. It removed the Communist exclusion clause from its constitution and absorbed the students affiliated with the Progressive Labor party. Its official line, which had been essentially reformist, became more consistently radical.

Although some of the prominent individuals of the student movement, such as Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin, the leaders of the "Yippies," appeared to be clowns rather than dedicated revolutionaries, others, including Hayden, participated seriously in the development of a New Left philosophy. Not just a repeat of the old leftist philosophy, the New Left was less influenced by Marx, more by Freud, had less admiration for Russia, and placed less emphasis on the role of the working classes in the historical process. The movement had intellectual debts to men and movements of the postwar years—to radical pacifists such as David Dellinger and A. J. Muste, to the civil rights movement of King and others, to the "beatniks" represented by Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac, and to radical intellectuals especially Paul Goodman, William Appleman Williams, C. Wright Mills, and Herbert Marcuse.

Less convinced than the theorists of the old left that capitalism would automatically and inevitably produce the revolution that would destroy it, the New Left paid great attention to the process by which people become "radicalized." Members concluded, often from personal experience, that participation in



protests could move people to the left. Because it often involved forceful opposition and frustration, such participation radicalized many of the participants during the 1960s. Criticism of American life, and accompanying reform, was replaced by total alienation.

In the New Left view, America had become a "sick society," dominated by big business and the military (the "establishment" or the "power structure"), and characterized by poverty, racism, violence, and war. The older generation had failed, and the average American lived a corrupt, materialistic, and contemptible existence.

According to the New Left, the war in Vietnam was an expression of the fundamental ills in American society. It was not just a mistake that could be remedied by a negotiated settlement and a more restrained use of national power in the future. It was an expression of American racism and another episode in the history of American oppression of nonwhite people. It was a product of capitalism's quest for raw materials, markets, and investment opportunities and consequent fear of revolutions. To avoid such adventures in the future, basic features of American life had to be destroyed.

In searching for ways to produce change, the New Left rejected liberalism. Its methods, such as free and rational debate, voting, compromise, and reform, were highly inadequate, incapable of producing the massive changes that were needed immediately. It was actually a prop for the established order. Moreover, the tolerance that liberals regarded as a virtue was a snare and a delusion; it was not an obligation of those who possessed the truth. Free speech, for instance, could be denied the unenlightened.

To obtain the power needed to destroy the established order, the New Left called for the mobilization of all disadvantaged and oppressed groups. The list included the poor, blacks, Mexican-Americans, and Indians. It also included students. There was an element of romanticism and primitivism involved. These groups, unlike the more "successful" people, had not been corrupted and thus could be trusted. There was also an elitist strain. Students especially were regarded as a superior group: intelligent, moral, idealistic, and capable of supplying leadership. By 1967, SDS had shifted its attention from the poor to the college students. Rejecting the Marxist theory about the role of the proletariat, it

emphasized the "new working class," the white-collar workers. It portrayed them as exploited and oppressed, although affluent, arguing that these people must be politicized and radicalized while they were on campus. The list of reliable groups did not include the organized workers. The unions were placed in the same category as the liberals and regarded as one of the institutions responsible for existing evils.

Increasingly, in the second half of the decade, members of the New Left advocated the use of violence. The turn toward violence in both theory and practice was a major change. The Weathermen faction of SDS and other radicals argued that the left must employ violence because the establishment controlled the political process and used violence to maintain control. Revolutionaries should engage in disruption and confrontation that would provoke the authorities into oppressive acts. As a result, they would receive sympathy; support would increase and more people would become involved in the movement. Weaker, more peaceful methods had no chance of success; violence, on the other hand, could produce a revolution.

Violence could smash established institutions, such as the university. According to the radical critics, many activities in the university were merely irrelevant and should be rooted out. Basically, the modern university was an institution that had been corrupted by the larger society; thus, it was no longer the conscience and critic of society. It provided rationalizations, trained manpower, and services for the dominant institutions; it discriminated against and exploited blacks, and it supported the war. In addition, the university was an important and vulnerable part of the larger society. It could be attacked much more easily than other parts of society; yet, serious damage to it would significantly harm the more important parts, and destruction or seizure of it could be the first step in a general revolution. Arguing that it was a political instrument of the power structure, the left maintained that the university should become the instrument of the revolutionaries. To accomplish their purposes, the left suggested, activists should seize upon matters of interest to students and demand major and quick changes. The results would be clashes with administrators that would push large numbers of students to the left and pave the way for bigger changes.

Acts of mass violence against the universities and other institutions would, the radicals assumed, lead to the establishment of

a new order, which would arise out of the ashes of the old. The basic feature of the new system would be "participatory democracy." Decisions would not be made for people by corrupt authorities; the people themselves would be actively involved in making the decisions affecting their lives.

Beginning in 1966, large-scale protest hit many campuses. Students seized buildings, destroyed property, imprisoned administrators, confronted police, and disrupted operations, even forcing schools to close temporarily. The demonstrators protested against many features of university life, such as its size, restrictions on social life and political action, "irrelevant" courses, poor and remote teachers, the emphasis on research, the lack of student participation in government, the power of administrators, and racial discrimination. Protesting against the university's relations with the military-industrial complex, the rebels staged disruptive demonstrations against on-campus recruitment by the military, the defense industries and the CIA, higher education's cooperation with the draft, and research being done in university laboratories for the Defense Department. The students' concern went beyond the university itself. As a result, they demonstrated against major features of American life, including racism and the war. The draft was particularly subjected to criticism. Arguing that it was an immoral way of fighting an immoral war, they protested against it by participating in antidraft rallies, refusing to serve, and fleeing to Canada.

By 1968, protest was a large and prominent part of American life. There were more than 3,000 campus demonstrations that spring. A major demonstration took place at Columbia University, in New York City. Promoted by SDS, the protest focused on Columbia's membership in the Institute for Defense Analysis and plans to build a gymnasium on the east side of campus, near Harlem. This upheaval included the seizure of several buildings, the holding of three administrators, police action, many injuries and arrests, and the disruption of class schedules. Changes were made in the governance of the university, and plans to build the gym were scrapped.

By the fall of 1968, SDS had more than 100,000 members, but the left had become much more than a young people's movement. It involved radical caucuses in professional societies and radicals in the media, some working in established forms and others in "underground" newspapers. Prominent intellectuals

expressed radical views in the *New York Review* and other places. Many groups, led by the Resistance, participated in mass protests against the war, making use of draft resistance and other methods.

The New Left challenged the fundamentals of American life. It insisted that the nation was a failure and demanded revolution. It challenged not only the business and military leaders and their institutions but also the leading intellectuals, the universities, and the labor unions.

As the student movement gained strength, a related development took shape in black America. In June 1966, James Meredith held a March for Freedom, a biracial, multi-organizational demonstration for voter registration in Mississippi. At that march, Stokely Carmichael called for "black power." Carmichael had replaced John Lewis as chairman of SNCC several weeks earlier and the displacement of this veteran of the nonviolent protest movement reflected rising discontent within the organization. For two years, young blacks in the movement had been growing increasingly resentful of the use of violence by their foes. Tension and conflict had been developing between whites and blacks in the movement, and concern had been mounting that the movement had not met the social and economic problems of the impoverished blacks. Black power was a product of these experiences. But its development was also influenced by the tradition of black nationalism, expounded by Marcus Garvey, Malcolm X, and others, and of jazz, found in the music of Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, and others.

The black power movement was critical of Martin Luther King and liberalism. King was considered too close to white leaders and too quick to compromise. His philosophy, with its emphasis on nonviolence, cooperation between whites and blacks, and integration, was rejected as inadequate.

Black power also attacked class exploitation, as well as white racism. Carmichael and his associates argued that attention should shift from the concerns of the middle class and focus on the impoverished blacks in the rural South and the urban ghettos. Programs should be established that would provide more and better jobs, education, housing, and food, and they should provide family allowances and a guaranteed annual income. These would have to be government programs, for private business could not serve the needs of the poor.

The advocates of black power insisted that blacks must draw

together and rely chiefly on their own efforts. Psychologically, the movement had a strong effect, for it emphasized black identity and pride. It was expressed, for example, in demands for black studies programs to provide education on the black heritage. Coalition politics was criticized—it would only produce compromises and small, insignificant changes when blacks were weak. Thus, blacks must develop their own strength, control the civil rights movement, and gain the ability to shape their own lives. Where they were a minority, they should have adequate representation in the governing institutions. Where they were the majority, they should control the institutions. They should, for example, control the school boards in black neighborhoods. “With power,” Carmichael maintained, “the masses could *make* or *participate in making* the decisions which govern their destinies, and thus create basic change in their day-to-day lives.” According to his definition, black power meant “the coming-together of black people to elect representatives and *to force those representatives to speak to their needs.*”

Related to this plea for self-determination was a critique of integration. By proclaiming it to be the goal, the civil rights movement ignored the big problems and insulted blacks for it implied that white society was superior. Black power theorists argued that, in fact, the opposite was true. Integration meant assimilation of blacks into an evil way of life. Rather than emphasize integration, blacks should construct their own institutions—their own businesses and cooperatives, their own political party, their own black cultural centers, and the like.

Like the New Left, black power theorists regarded violence as an important force. Some advocated nonviolent forms of power, such as voting and boycotts, but most, if not all, insisted that acts of violence by blacks were permissible if whites did not change their ways. As Carmichael explained in 1966:

SNCC reaffirms the right of black men everywhere to defend themselves when threatened or attacked. As for initiating the use of violence, we hope that such programs as ours will make that unnecessary, but it is not for us to tell black communities whether they can or cannot use any particular form of action to resolve their problems. Responsibility for the use of violence by black men, whether in self-defense or initiated by them, lies with the white community.

Similarly, Carmichael's successor as Chairman of SNCC, H. Rap Brown, maintained: "Violence is necessary and it's as American as cherry pie."

The radical wing of the black power movement, the Black Panthers, especially emphasized the role of violence. The Black Panthers was founded in Oakland, California, in October 1966 by two young blacks, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale. Shortly after, Carmichael and Eldridge Cleaver joined the organization, contributing to its ideological development, and it spread to other urban centers. The Panthers emphasized the importance of the gun as a means of self-defense, a symbol of manhood and courage, and an instrument of revolution; they regarded the police as the symbol of oppression of blacks by whites, labelled them "pigs," and sought to protect ghetto blacks from them. Consequently, frequent "shoot-outs" occurred, in which both Panthers and police were killed. While the organization engaged in nonrevolutionary activity, such as providing breakfasts for ghetto children, the Panthers were a revolutionary group. They sought to build a black lower-class base and to work with white radicals. As Newton explained, "our one goal is to crush American Capitalism and American Imperialism." The reformist goals of other black movements and nonviolent techniques could not produce the changes that were required in the lives of the black masses.

Although the Panthers endorsed violence, they opposed the unsystematic rioting in the black ghettos that took place during the decade. First erupting in 1964, a major riot took place in July in Harlem, the biggest episode of its kind since 1943. In August of the following year, an even larger riot exploded in the Watts section of Los Angeles. Still more took place in 1966; then the rioting reached a new high in the summer of 1967. The largest that year was in Detroit, and there were major riots in Newark and several other cities. In total, about 70 cities were hit by large-scale disorders, resulting in 85 deaths and more than 3,000 injuries, most of them black. In addition, a great deal of property was damaged, and governments spent large sums in efforts to halt the death and destruction.

The objects of attack were the representatives of white society in the black ghettos. White-owned businesses and the police were hit especially hard. Symbols of white power, white racism, and white repression, they felt the force of black resentment and frustration.

The riots were unorganized acts of protest against slum conditions and white power. They were political acts involving agitators preaching violence. But the chief force at work was the contrast between ghetto life and suburban life. The typical rioter was a young black male who had always lived in the city, had attended but not graduated from high school, had a poor job or no job, was proud to be black, was extremely hostile toward whites, and hoped for a better life. He did not want to destroy the capitalistic system; he wanted a larger share of its benefits. Television influenced him significantly: it provided a picture of an alternative way of life, a life lived by whites in the suburbs. The young black wanted that type of life. Migration from the South, the civil rights movement, and the war on poverty had stirred hopes in his community, but they were not being realized. He felt capable of breaking out of the life he was in, but he doubted that the political system would solve his problems.

The American past had not been peaceful, but the violence of the 1960s was unexpected. Before it erupted, Americans had enjoyed two decades that were almost completely free of domestic violence. Furthermore, most of the earlier violence had been designed to protect the established order; but now violence was, as Richard Hofstadter observed, "the outgrowth of forcible acts by dissidents and radicals who are expressing hostility to middle-class ways and to established power." In addition, racial violence had changed its character. Earlier race riots had largely been attacks by whites on blacks. Now, blacks were taking the lead.

Both liberals and conservatives were alarmed by these new developments, but their reactions differed significantly. The liberals, including the civil rights leaders, believed that social and economic conditions were the cause of the urban riots and maintained that reforms would provide the solution. The civil rights movement and the antipoverty efforts, while valuable, had not come to grips with the basic problems of lower-income blacks in the urban centers. According to Senator Stephen Young of Ohio, "The housing program is too small. The poverty program is too small. The program for slum schools is too small." Massive, long-term efforts were required to provide real jobs, improve housing, upgrade schools, do away with slums, and produce other changes. Both government and business needed to be drawn into the battle against urban problems. Thus, liberal

Democrats and Republicans, such as Senators Robert Kennedy and Jacob Javits of New York, Abraham Ribicoff of Connecticut, Joseph Clark of Pennsylvania, and Charles Percy of Illinois, worked for new programs that would supply jobs and improve housing for slum-dwellers. At the same time, A. Philip Randolph and other civil rights leaders proposed a "freedom budget" of \$185 billion, over a ten-year period, designed to provide jobs and job training, improve housing and schools, and solve other problems that plagued impoverished Americans. As Bayard Rustin observed, the civil rights movement had evolved "into a full-fledged *social* movement." It was "now concerned not merely with removing the barriers to full *opportunity* but with achieving *equality*."

Veterans of the civil rights movement were not ashamed of their accomplishments. Although it had not solved the problem of poverty, it had destroyed the legal structure of segregation, discrimination, and disenfranchisement. Integration moved forward in the South after the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the political advance of Southern blacks was accelerated by the voting legislation of 1965. Registration jumped from less than 1.5 million in 1964 to nearly 3.25 million by 1969. In Alabama, less than one-fourth of adult blacks had been registered at the time the law was passed; five years later more than three-fifths were registered. In Mississippi during the same period, the percentage moved from well below 10 to more than 65. And the number of elected black officeholders in the South went from 70, in 1965, to 665, in 1970. Among those elected were Charles Evers, the mayor of Fayette, Mississippi, and black legislators in every Southern state except Arkansas. In the summer of 1965, not a single black was registered in Lowndes County, Alabama. In 1970, Lowndes elected a black sheriff. Blacks, of course, did not dominate Southern politics. George Wallace remained the leading figure in Alabama, and an equally determined Lester Maddox served as governor of neighboring Georgia from 1967 to 1971. But blacks were growing in importance in Southern political life.

In other parts of the nation there were additional signs of black political advances. The President appointed a black, Walter Washington, to the top position in the city government of Washington, D.C. Thurgood Marshall became the first black to serve on the United States Supreme Court. Thirteen blacks



were serving in Congress by 1971, more than ever before. The voters of Gary, Indiana, and Cleveland, Ohio, elected black mayors, Richard Hatcher and Carl Stokes, making Stokes the first black mayor of one of the nation's ten largest cities.

Although the civil rights veterans believed in black unity and power, they rejected most of the black power theories. King, Rustin, Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young, and others continued to advocate nonviolent methods, coalitions of blacks and whites, and integration. As one of the most outspoken critics of black power, Rustin advocated a coalition of whites and blacks working through the unions and the Democratic party to bring about substantial social and economic change and an integrated and prosperous society. He insisted that blacks alone could not develop the power required to create the good society.

While believing that urban blacks and college students had genuine grievances, liberals criticized their methods and ideas. To many liberals, the radicals seemed irrational, anti-intellectual, authoritarian, even fascist. Insisting that universities were essential and valuable institutions, liberals argued that they did not deserve the treatment they were receiving and would lose their best qualities if the radicals won.

Disruption and violence stimulated a surprising recovery for the right. Seemingly dead after the defeat of Goldwater, conservatives demonstrated new strength as early as the elections of 1966. One of their major victories came in California, where Ronald Reagan was elected governor. The victory of this former movie and television personality owed much to the turmoil in Berkeley and Watts. Reagan promised to deal forcefully with disorder. Thus, the emphasis on force was a central theme of the right in this turbulent period. Conservatives offered it as the solution to problems at home and abroad.

The conservatives rejected the liberal analysis of the causes and cures of disorders. According to conservative theory, the riots had been produced by agitators and conspirators, not by social and economic problems. In Congress, conservatives employed the House Un-American Activities Committee and other investigating bodies to explore the situation and find the guilty parties, and they promoted legislation designed to punish "outside agitators" and demonstrators who burned their draft cards. Police forces and national guard units were given new equipment and antiriot training. The FBI and other agencies

expanded their programs of surveillance, developing files on "agitators," "militants," and "activists" of many varieties.

A swing to the right was especially obvious in the Northern cities, and it was most visible in the growing opposition to the civil rights movement. Earlier, the movement sought to promote change in the South. Now, it was seeking to integrate Northern schools and residential areas and to enlarge job opportunities for blacks. Many white Northerners, especially in the working-class neighborhoods, felt threatened by the movement. The integration of schools, for example, seemed to jeopardize the quality of education and, hence, the job prospects of working-class children. At the same time, efforts to equalize job opportunities seemed to mean the loss of jobs by whites. Earlier, most whites in the North had believed that Kennedy and Johnson were pushing integration at the right pace, but, by the fall of 1966, most believed that Johnson was moving too fast. White workers rallied behind opponents of new developments in civil rights, such as Mrs. Louise Day Hicks, a candidate for mayor of Boston. And although Stokes and Hatcher were elected, both of these black Democrats won by only narrow margins in cities that traditionally had provided large victories for Democratic candidates.

The reaction took other forms as well. In response to black pride, some people gained a new or renewed sense of ethnic identity, and spokesmen called for "Italian power" or proclaimed that "Polish is beautiful" and advocated ethnic studies programs. To working-class people in the cities and to the people in the towns and on the farms, country music had great appeal. Often its lyrics rejected change, championed America and traditional values and morals, and expressed a sense of threat, even loss, and a spirit of defiance.

By 1968, American society seemed to be disintegrating. Many college students, urban blacks, and Northern whites were acutely aware of their group identities, and group conflict was intense and often violent. The task of leadership in America had seldom been more demanding.

## Chapter 15

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# The Decline and Fall of Lyndon Johnson

In the late 1960s, the task of leadership in America proved to be greater than Lyndon Johnson's abilities. His power reached its peak in 1965, declining thereafter as a result of the closely linked war in Vietnam and turbulence at home. Finally, in March 1968, he felt compelled to surrender the power that remained in his hands.

In Vietnam, the President expanded American military pressure steadily for three years. By the end of 1966, 385,000 American troops were there. A year later, the troop level was nearly 500,000, and, early the following year, it went to 540,000. During the same period, he increased the number of targets in North Vietnam open to United States bombers; thus, before the end of 1967, they were attacking within a few miles of the Chinese border.

Johnson hoped that by escalating the war, he could create a military situation that would bring the North Vietnamese to the bargaining table. He and his advisers repeatedly insisted that they were ready to negotiate a settlement and called for negotiations. They backed up their overtures with appeals to leaders outside the United States, promises of aid in developing all of Vietnam, pauses in the bombing, and announcements that bombing would cease when conditions were right.

The opposing sides in the war remained far apart on the basic issue of the role of the National Liberation Front in South

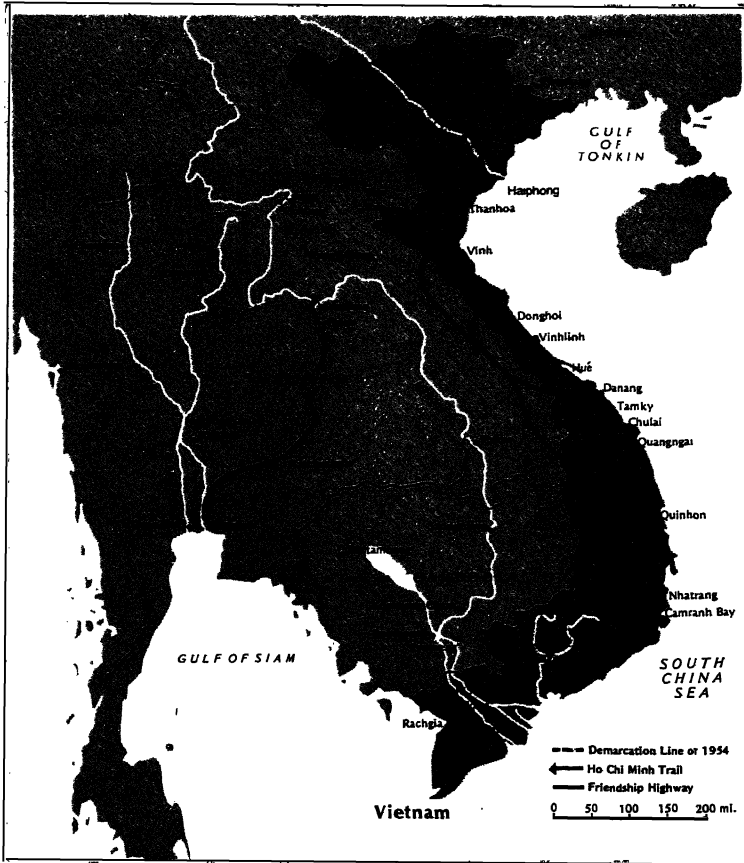
Vietnam's future. Johnson seemed determined to uphold the existing regime in Saigon, while the Viet Cong and their allies from the North seemed equally determined to overturn it. The Viet Cong were not ready to accept Johnson's terms, and they concluded that they would gain more on the battlefield than at the bargaining table.

Johnson seemed caught in a situation he could not master, and his escalation of the war created other problems. Russia, which was providing aid for North Vietnam, demanded that the United States stop bombing that country and insisted that there could be little improvement in American-Russian relations while war raged in Asia. America's European allies also protested, arguing that the United States had become too interested in Asia. Criticism was especially strong in the United Nations. In the fall of 1967, fifty members of the General Assembly called for an unconditional halt in the bombing.

As the costs of the war mounted, the American foreign aid program suffered serious setbacks. Recognizing the strength of congressional opposition, Johnson proposed an unusually small appropriation in 1967. It failed to satisfy the opponents, however, and they were strong enough in Congress to produce additional cuts. In the end, only \$2 billion were authorized, the smallest sum in the twenty-year history of the program.

As Johnson escalated the war, his fortunes at home shifted abruptly from success to frustration, and his foreign policy was the major cause of the change. Although he insisted that the country's economic strength enabled it to fight poverty in the United States and Communism in Asia, he did not call for the anticipated expansion of the war on poverty. Because "even a prosperous nation cannot meet all its goals all at once," he explained in 1966, "the rate of advance of the new programs has been held below what might have been proposed in less troubled times." In 1965, the war had raised defense spending by approximately \$9 billion.

In 1966, for the first time during his presidency, a Johnson civil rights proposal was defeated in Congress. Its major feature was the establishment of federal standards in the sale or rental of housing. It encountered strong opposition outside the South for, unlike the earlier civil rights laws, the North would be affected by it, and it was hurt by the new split in the black protest movement and by the riots. Furthermore, Johnson did not battle as strenuously for it as he had for earlier civil rights proposals.



### *The Vietnam War*

The congressional elections of 1966 weakened Johnson's position at home still more. The Republicans stressed the "law and order" issue, charged that "high officials of the administration have condoned and encouraged disrespect for law and order," and won a net increase of forty-seven seats in the House and three in the Senate. Although Johnson interpreted the election as a normal swing away from the large Democratic majorities elected in 1964, public disapproval of the President and some of his policies had exerted an influence. Furthermore, the Republican victory guaranteed that the conservative coalition would once again dominate Congress.

Johnson's domestic proposals, in 1967, reflected his awareness of new limits on his power. While he continued to endorse his Great Society programs and to insist that the country could afford both the war in Asia and these efforts at home, he conceded that demands on the nation's resources were heavy. The mood of Congress as well as the war limited Johnson's activities. As the year progressed, congressmen—Southern Democrats and Republicans—demonstrated a determination to meet the costs of the war by holding down domestic spending, and they cut appropriations below his requests in crucial areas, such as the war on poverty. Johnson also failed in his second effort to secure passage of civil rights legislation attacking discrimination in housing. As a result of the 1966 elections, opponents had become stronger, and Senator Dirksen, the minority leader who helped obtain passage of the Civil Rights Laws of 1964 and 1965, was now one of the Northern opponents. The President lashed out at his Republican foes, charging that they were "wooden soldiers of the status quo."

The state of the economy added to Johnson's difficulties. After nearly a decade of relative price stability and six years in which economic policy emphasized economic growth and full employment, prices were rising more rapidly than at any time since the Korean War. The cause of this rise was that defense spending, which had been hovering around \$55 billion per year before 1965, jumped above \$72 billion in 1967 while the tax rate remained essentially the same.

The increase in spending was much greater than expected. Early in 1966, the administration had planned to spend only slightly more than \$10 billion on the war in fiscal 1967, but the war grew much larger than anticipated. Actual expenditures were over \$19 billion, and they continued to rise after the new fiscal year began in July.

In the uncertain situation in 1966, the President had received conflicting advice as to how to deal with the war's impact on the economy. Some advisers advocated an immediate tax increase to combat inflation, provide funds for enlarged domestic programs, and permit the Federal Reserve Board to lower the discount rate that had been raised to tighten credit. Other advisers, not convinced that inflation had become a serious problem, warned that a tax increase might trigger a recession. The President responded with proposals for small increases that Congress enacted.

In late 1966 and early 1967, inflation increased and Johnson moved more decisively but encountered effective opposition. Early in 1967, he called for a 6 percent surcharge on income taxes, and, in August, he proposed, instead, a 10 percent surcharge. Congress, however, provided firm resistance, influenced by the argument that a substantial cut in government spending was the best way to combat inflation. This was a major theme in the thinking of most Republican and Southern Democratic congressmen. Wilbur Mills of Arkansas, the chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee, played the most important role in the battle against the President's proposal. Along with other conservative congressmen, he insisted that Johnson cut domestic spending by at least \$5 billion before they would consider his proposed tax increase. By the end of 1967, the tax proposal had not moved beyond Mills's committee. Johnson no longer mastered Congress.

Actually, military spending had grown only slightly faster than the economy as a whole. Military spending had moved from 8.9 percent of gross national product, in 1964, to 9.2 percent, in 1967, and the percentage was lower than in any Eisenhower year except 1960 and in every Kennedy year. Thus, the economy could have supported larger domestic programs, but political leaders were alarmed by the rise of defense spending, willing to use it as an excuse to cut domestic funds, and unwilling to develop the tax program that would both support the programs and avoid inflation.

Johnson's inhibitions—his new sense of limited power—appeared dramatically in his reaction to the rioting in the urban centers in the summer of 1967. He admitted that the riots revealed that not enough was being done to solve the social and economic problems of the cities, and he insisted that suppression, while necessary, was not enough. In response to the most serious riot in Detroit, he ordered federal troops to the city, at Governor George Romney's request. But he did not advocate bold new programs. In fact, he merely called for enactment of earlier proposals. The result was that his programs were continued but at lower levels of expenditure than he advised. To a man seriously interested in domestic reform, as Johnson was, this development was deeply disappointing.

Plagued by riots, campus unrest, inflation, and war—and by dramatic and unfavorable TV coverage of the war—Johnson's

popularity declined rapidly after 1965. Although 63 percent of the people approved of his handling of his office in January 1966, only 44 percent did so in October. Approval shot up when he acted in a restrained fashion during the Arab-Israeli war, in June 1967, and then moved on to a summit meeting with Soviet Premier Aleksei Kosygin. In any event, the improvement was only temporary. He suffered setbacks from the riots that erupted in July, from his proposal for a 10 percent income tax surcharge, from his decision to send more troops to Vietnam, and from popular disillusionment following the conference with Kosygin. At the end of August, polls showed that public approval had dropped to 39 percent—a new low for Johnson or for any President since 1952. By now, the Johnson haters were legion, and no charge against him seemed extreme: “Hey, hey, LBJ, How many kids did you kill today?” the demonstrators taunted.

Johnson now had a wide range of critics. Some, the “hawks,” maintained that he was not using enough military power in Vietnam. This was also the private view of military leaders who were not satisfied with the rate of escalation, but could not express their views publicly. The hawks agreed with Johnson that the war was important, but they insisted that he should seek a quick and total victory and that the air force should have more freedom in selecting targets.

All hawks were not Republican, and, moreover, not every Republican criticized Johnson for failing to use enough military force. Dirksen, for example, was the most active defender of the President’s war policies in Congress, and other Republicans were “doves.” Furthermore, Republican opposition to the war mounted rapidly during 1967, as several prominent members of the party, including Senators Jacob Javits of New York and Edward Brooke of Massachusetts, and Governor Romney, switched dramatically from defending American policies to criticizing them. Illinois Senator Charles Percy called for greater use of Asian forces and warned of war with China, and Senator Thruston Morton of Kentucky charged that Johnson had been “brainwashed” by the military-industrial complex into believing that the United States could achieve a military victory in Southeast Asia.

Most important for Johnson’s political future was the disintegration of the coalition that had given him his victory in 1964. While most labor leaders remained behind the President,



many workers were unhappy. Many of them, as well as many Southerners, applauded Wallace's attacks upon Johnson's welfare and civil rights programs. In addition, they supported the Alabama politician's suggestions that the enemy in Vietnam and the demonstrators, dissenters, and rioters at home should be dealt with forcefully.

On the other end of the spectrum, leaders of the civil rights movement, including King, withdrew their support of Johnson. King emphasized the domestic consequences of the war. He insisted that a civil rights leader should work for peace because blacks were being called upon to make disproportionately large sacrifices in Vietnam, and because the conflict was getting in the way of efforts to attack the programs that were plaguing blacks in the United States.

The signs of disintegration were especially obvious in the Senate. There some of Johnson's old friends, such as Senator J. William Fulbright of Arkansas, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Mike Mansfield of Montana, Johnson's successor as majority leader, emerged as critics of the war. Prominent liberals, including Robert F. Kennedy of New York and Eugene McCarthy of Minnesota, challenged Johnson's policies. Once the master of the Senate, he now faced strong opposition there.

Fulbright, Kennedy, and other doves challenged Johnson's methods and theories and warned of the consequences. They pictured him as too quick to resort to force, raised doubts about the sincerity of his peace efforts, and advocated negotiations. The doves denied that America's interests demanded support for South Vietnam and challenged the suggestion that a Viet Cong victory there would lead inevitably to additional Communist victories in Southeast Asia. To the poet Robert Lowell, it seemed that the country was "in danger of imperceptibly becoming an explosive and suddenly chauvinistic nation" and might "even be drifting . . . to the last nuclear ruin."

The liberals maintained that the nation had moved beyond the limits of its power. As Ronald Steel argued, a "dangerous gap" had developed "between what we would like to accomplish and what we can reasonably hope to accomplish." According to Senator Frank Church of Idaho, "we cannot, as a foreign nation, win the war." This basic liberal theme appeared in the arguments of some retired military men, including Generals Matthew

Ridgway, James Gavin, and David Shoup, as well as liberal senators and prominent intellectuals. George Kennan, the theorist of containment, suggested that the United States could not successfully "shoulder the burden of determining the political realities" in a country "remote from our own shores, from our own culture, and from the experience of our people."

A change in economic theory was taking place in liberal circles. From the late 1940s to the early 1960s, economists had stressed the stimulating effect of defense spending, but now many economists and liberals were viewing it as a burden. According to liberal analyses, progress could be stimulated by shifting spending away from defense and war.

The liberals also became more critical of the military-industrial complex and the draft. The complex seemed to have become too powerful and a major source of the nation's difficulties. The draft imposed an excessive burden, as well as uncertainty, coercion, and great risks, on young Americans, especially males who could not afford to go to college and obtain educational deferments. A voluntary army, with enlistments encouraged by higher rates of pay, was suggested as an alternative. These critics of the draft challenged those who argued that a voluntary system could not produce a force of adequate size and skill.

Well before the end of 1967, many liberal Democrats began to hope that Johnson would not be on the ticket in 1968. Robert Kennedy appeared to be the most promising substitute. Interest in him as a candidate, at least for the vice presidency, had been building, since early in 1964, and had grown, during 1966, as Vice-President Humphrey's defense of administration policies generated dissatisfaction. Kennedy seemed aware of domestic problems, was hostile to Vietnam policies, and according to the pollsters, was very popular. He announced, however, that he would support Johnson.

Kennedy's decision did not stop opposition to Johnson. On November 30, 1967, Eugene McCarthy announced that he would run against the leader of his party. The Minnesota senator hoped to counter "the growing sense of alienation from politics," promote responsible political action, and force a change in Asian policies, and many discontented college students rallied behind him, hoping to find a way to end the war and change America. The young McCarthyites were confident that active young Americans could save the nation and the world, and that they need not employ violence to do so.

As criticism mounted, the President did not wait patiently for the verdict of history. He made strenuous efforts to convert or weaken his critics, meeting with some and denouncing others. He questioned their patriotism, courage, and intelligence. Once he referred to them as "nervous Nellies" and urged them to "cool it." Moreover, he insisted that they represented only a small part of the population.

The President held on tenaciously to his conception of the importance of the war. The administration continued to defend its course of action by emphasizing that Communist China was a threat to "the free nations of Asia" and to American security. If American efforts failed in Vietnam, the administration contended, Southeast Asia would become part of a Chinese empire, and a larger, more dangerous war would follow, involving a billion Chinese and nuclear weapons.

Johnson remained confident that American power would prevail in Vietnam. He grew discouraged about prospects for a negotiated settlement, and, although he assumed that American efforts were succeeding, he seemed reconciled to a long struggle. Before the end of 1967, the military chiefs and others advocating reliance on military pressure, such as Dean Rusk and Walt Rostow, were his most influential advisers on Vietnamese matters, and he rejected new suggestions that bombing of North Vietnam should be stopped in order to encourage Hanoi to come to the bargaining table. He believed that bombing was effective, and that another pause would only allow infiltration to continue unmolested. Instead of halting the bombing, he increased military pressure.

Johnson's new escalation indicated that he now had more confidence in his military chiefs than in Secretary McNamara, the top civilian in defense. Friction between the Secretary and the chiefs reached a new high in 1967. Bombing was a major factor in their controversy. McNamara had become increasingly skeptical of its effectiveness and increasingly depressed about his own role in the escalation of the war. Doubting the possibility of an American victory, he worked for the de-escalation of the bombing. By fall, the stepped-up air war indicated that the President had accepted the advice of the Secretary's critics. Not surprisingly, the administration announced late in November that McNamara would leave the Pentagon. Many observers were convinced that he had been forced out, and that his departure would be followed by further escalation, for a hawk, Clark

Clifford, was chosen to replace him. Certainly the President, who once had admired McNamara enormously, had lost confidence in him and did not share his doubts about American power.

Johnson's confidence in his own power had not been destroyed by his experiences since 1965. As he stepped up his campaign against his critics, he regained some of his lost ground. By January 1968, 48 percent of the people approved of his handling of his job, and he now appeared capable of defeating any of his rivals for the presidency.

Nevertheless, Johnson continued to move cautiously in domestic affairs. He pushed once again for an increase in taxes and for civil rights legislation, and he called for new efforts to promote law and order and protect consumers. But he remained reluctant to press for new, large-scale government programs to deal with urban problems. He tried, instead, to persuade private industry to become more active in the quest for solutions.

At the same time, the President proposed a defense budget that was \$3 billion above the current expenditure. His list of requests included development and deployment of an anti-ballistic missile system (ABM), which represented another defeat for McNamara. McNamara had argued that installation of such a system would be a costly and wasteful expenditure of funds. Instead, the nation could, and should, rely on its persuasive retaliatory power for its defense and try to persuade the Russians not to deploy a defense system. But he had to contend with pressure for the ABM from military leaders, defense industrialists, congressmen, and others that had been building for a decade, and they now argued that the reported Soviet decision to deploy anti-ballistic missiles meant that the United States must also do so in order to remain secure. In September 1967, following new evidence of Chinese progress in nuclear arms, McNamara announced a decision to deploy a limited ABM system, costing \$5 billion and designed chiefly to protect the nation against a possible attack by China. Johnson now pressed for congressional endorsement and also for funds to enlarge the offensive or retaliatory missile system.

Still skeptical of North Vietnam's willingness to negotiate, Johnson remained opposed to suggestions that the United States halt its bombing of the North. Hanoi, he insisted, must first assure him that it would promptly begin productive peace talks

and "not take advantage of our restraint as they have in the past."

Suddenly, beginning in late January and continuing into March, a series of severe blows struck the President. First, on January 23, an American intelligence ship, the *Pueblo*, was seized by North Korea. Shortly thereafter, on January 31, the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese began a major offensive that challenged the administration's optimistic appraisals of the war. Then, on March 12, Senator McCarthy, aided by an army of students, demonstrated surprising strength in the New Hampshire Democratic primary. Finally, Robert Kennedy announced, on March 16, that he would seek the presidential nomination. With popular approval of Johnson's handling of the job now below 40 percent, defeat in the primaries seemed to lie ahead.

As a result, Johnson announced two major decisions on March 31. First, the bombing of North Vietnam was to be reduced in the hope of getting negotiations started. Second, and more astonishing, was that he was withdrawing as a candidate for re-election.

Several factors influenced Johnson's decision to withdraw. In addition to personal considerations, there was the prospect of



Late March 1968: Lyndon Johnson with Hubert Humphrey and General Creighton Abrams (The Lyndon Baines Johnson Library)

being rejected by his party or by the voters. Moreover, he believed if he were not a candidate, he would be able to accomplish more at home and abroad. Apparently, he now recognized what many had seen for some time: the American people had lost confidence in him. Thus, Johnson, a man who had always hungered for approval and feared defeat, was now convinced that he had been sabotaged by the media, the Eastern intellectual establishment, and the Kennedy supporters, and he lost confidence in his ability to shape events.

An illustration of the now persistent conflict between the President and Congress was the successful opposition to the appointment of Supreme Court Justice Abe Fortas as Chief Justice of the United States. A bipartisan senatorial coalition, led by Sam J. Ervin, Jr. (a North Carolina Democrat), Strom Thurmond (a Republican from South Carolina), and Robert P. Griffin (a Michigan Republican), objected to the appointee's close ties with the President and to court decisions on civil rights and civil liberties, including those dealing with suspected criminals, Communists, and obscenity.

Johnson did, however, enjoy a few victories in his last year. Congress finally accepted his proposals for a civil rights law with open housing provisions and for a 10 percent income tax surcharge, the first increase in income taxes since the Korean War. The legislators rejected his gun control proposals but outlawed the interstate-mail-order sale of guns. They endorsed other crime control measures that he favored, such as federal aid in upgrading local police forces, but added wiretapping provisions and other features that he feared. Congress funded a variety of antipoverty efforts, but provided less money than the President recommended. The legislators also passed new measures to protect consumers and increased social security benefits.

In 1964, Johnson's party had seemed destined to dominate American politics for a long period, but, by 1968, it was weakened sharply by serious internal conflict. After Johnson withdrew from the race, Robert Kennedy, aided by memories of his brother, seemed to be in the lead for the Democratic presidential nomination. Senator McCarthy focused his campaign on the war, challenging the foreign policy and the presidential and military power that seemed responsible for it. Much more intense and emotional than his brother had been or than McCarthy was, Kennedy concentrated on domestic problems; he had much greater appeal to wage earners and lower-income groups, both

white and nonwhite, and less appeal to college students and affluent liberals. He won primary elections in Indiana, Nebraska, California, and South Dakota, losing only in Oregon. Then, on June 5, he became the fatal victim of an assassin's gun. The assault took place in Los Angeles immediately after he had won the California primary.

The Kennedy assassination occurred only two months after the murder of Martin Luther King. King was in Memphis supporting a strike of black sanitation workers, and his assassination triggered riots in urban centers throughout the nation. The twin killings stimulated talk that the United States was a "sick and violent society." It also created demands for stronger gun controls and stricter law enforcement and led to the formation of a National Commission on the Cause and Prevention of Violence.

Meanwhile, Vice-President Hubert Humphrey was quietly and effectively seeking the support of delegates who were not selected in primary elections. Once a liberal hero, he had alienated most of his former associates, although he had not rejected liberalism. In 1966 and 1967, much of his time had been spent combatting critics of the administration. A critic of black power, he praised the accomplishments of the civil rights movement, helped two black Democrats win elections for mayor in Gary and Cleveland, and lauded the administration's domestic record. He insisted that the nation could attack problems at home even while waging a costly war in Asia, and when rioting erupted in 1967, he called for a domestic "Marshall Plan" to solve the social and economic problems that he regarded as the source of the violence.

Humphrey's defense of the administration's foreign policy created major difficulties for him among the liberals. He defended American policies in Vietnam and spoke optimistically of the outcome there. American security, he insisted, was threatened by developments in Southeast Asia, and the United States, through its military efforts, had to obtain an acceptable settlement in Vietnam. Arguing that critics of the war were prolonging the struggle, by leading the enemy to believe that Americans would soon accept its terms for peace, he likened Kennedy's proposal that the NLF should be represented in South Vietnam's government to placing "a fox in a chicken coop." Liberals disliked both his ideas on foreign policy and his manner of expressing them. He seemed much too enthusiastic and self-righteous.

Humphrey won the nomination without much liberal support, but his victory had only limited value. Organized labor, many urban leaders, and the South rallied behind him and helped him win on the first ballot, defeating McCarthy who had failed to unite antiadministration forces. Unfortunately for Humphrey, his party was bitterly divided. While Johnson regarded him as a satisfactory candidate, discontented liberals regarded him as too much a part of the administration. They were also unhappy with the party's plank on Vietnam, which was adopted instead of an antiwar alternative after a sharp fight on the convention floor.

Much of the discontent in the nation came to a head at the Democratic convention in Chicago. In August, thousands of critics of the administration descended upon the city to stage demonstrations. The demonstrators included members of the National Mobilization Committee to End the War in Vietnam, a New Left organization, and the Youth International Party (Yippies), which nominated a pig for President. Rumors of plans to disrupt the convention and city circulated widely. Some demonstrators hurled missiles, taunts, and obscenities at the police, who, in response, moved on the demonstrators—and also bystanders and newsmen—with clubs, tear gas, and chemical sprays. Mayor Richard Daley's determination that his city and the convention would not be disrupted, his encouragement of forceful police action, and the interest of some radicals in confrontation and disruption all contributed to the violence.

For the Republicans, the task of selecting a presidential candidate was much easier. Former Vice-President Richard M. Nixon, who had suffered major defeats in 1960 and, when he ran for governor of California, in 1962, announced his candidacy in February, after a four-year effort to rebuild his strength in the party. He was helped by the withdrawal of one candidate, Romney, and the reluctance of Rockefeller and Reagan to pursue the nomination. In August, Nixon was nominated on the first ballot by a relatively harmonious party.

A strong third-party movement, the American Independent Party, headed by Wallace, complicated the political situation. Wallace campaigned against "pseudointellectuals," "pointy heads," "anarchists," liberals, demonstrators, riots, the peace and civil rights movements, crime-in-the-streets, and restrictions on military operations in Vietnam and on police actions in the



cities. He promised to win the war and reestablish law and order, and he emphasized his belief in force by selecting a retired Air Force General, Curtis LeMay, as his running mate. Appealing for support from the "average man," Wallace developed great strength among white Southerners and white blue-collar groups, people who felt threatened by recent developments and dissatisfied with many features of their lives. By September, he was on the ballot in every state and seemed likely to get 20 percent of the vote.

During September, it appeared that Nixon would win a large victory. He had gained strength during August, helped by the contrast between Republican blandness and Democratic turbulence, and he was assisted by the refusal of many Kennedy and McCarthy followers to endorse Humphrey. While Humphrey floundered and struggled with hecklers, Nixon campaigned efficiently, confidently, and cautiously. He ignored dissidents, blacks, and the big cities, sought the support of middle-class whites throughout the nation, and placed heavy emphasis on the suburbs, believing that his greatest opportunities were there. He promised a quick and honorable end to the war, though he refused to say how he would produce this, arguing that he must not harm the negotiations nor tie his hands. He also promised a big increase in nuclear weaponry and the rapid development of the ABM, charging that the Democrats had created a "security gap." As to domestic issues, he gave "restoration of law and order" the top priority, blamed Supreme Court decisions and Attorney General Ramsey Clark for the increase in the crime rate, talked of the development of "black capitalism" as the solution to the problems of urban blacks, and promised to relax federal pressure for change in race relations.

In October, however, Humphrey gained ground rapidly. Much of the progress came at Wallace's expense, for Wallace reached his peak of popularity before the end of September and dropped rapidly thereafter among blue-collar workers in the North. Some of the Kennedy and McCarthy Democrats, including McCarthy himself, also moved into the Humphrey camp. Fear of Wallace, dislike of Nixon, unusually strenuous and effective efforts by organized labor, and traditional ties to the Democratic party, as well as Humphrey's vigorous and zealous campaigning, contributed to these developments. Humphrey rejected the argument that the New Deal had out-

lived its usefulness, promised to "stop the bombing of the North as an acceptable risk for peace," and criticized Nixon's proposals for a "needless and mortally dangerous escalation of the arms race." His words helped to remove doubts about his liberalism.

Johnson also helped Humphrey. He made speeches attacking Humphrey's foes and calling for a Democratic victory as a means of maintaining the progress of the Johnson years. Most important, he de-escalated the war once again by stopping all bombing of North Vietnam. In May, negotiations with the North Vietnamese had begun in Paris, but the negotiators had failed to make progress. Johnson refused to accept the demands for an end to all bombing of the North, insisting that the North Vietnamese must first reduce their own war efforts. He also refused to force Saigon to accept participation by the NLF in the government of the South. The two sides also clashed on the issue of the roles of Saigon and the NLF at the peace table. By fall, some of Johnson's advisers were able to persuade him that the time was right for a halt in the bombing. It seemed a way of getting the talks moving before he left office. The administration drafted a new proposal; secret diplomatic exchanges took place, and Johnson's military advisers informed him that they could now accept a bombing halt. On October 31, he announced an end to the bombing of the North and an agreement that Saigon and the NLF could begin to participate in the talks. Explaining that he expected the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong to restrict their own military operations, he declared that "productive, serious, and intensive negotiations" would begin promptly. Immediately after the announcement, several Democratic foes of the war endorsed Humphrey.

The outcome was a Nixon victory by a narrow margin. Wallace received less than 14 percent of the more than 73 million votes and carried only five states, all in the deep South, although 40 percent of his vote came from outside the South. Winning by the smallest plurality since 1912, Nixon obtained 43.3 percent of the popular vote as compared with 42.7 percent for Humphrey. The Middle West, the West, the Border States, and the South, especially the middle- and upper-income voters in the suburbs and small towns, gave Nixon his victory. He did not carry a major city. Humphrey held most, though not all, of the big-city, blue-collar, and minority-group components of the Democratic coalition, enjoying especially large victories in the

black neighborhoods, and he carried ten states in the area from Maine to Minnesota. In the South, however, he only carried Texas, and in the West, he gained the electoral votes of Washington and Hawaii.

The Republicans, however, remained the minority party. They dominated the state houses, but, enjoying little congressional success in the South and the Northeast, they only gained five seats in the Senate and four in the House and remained the minority in both chambers by wide margins. The outcome of the elections suggested that the problems that plagued the nation would not be easily and quickly solved.

Johnson's difficulties after 1965 demonstrated that his abilities as a leader were not the only factor that produced his successes in 1964-1965. At that time, he had operated in a favorable situation and had known how to take advantage of it. Later, he operated in a poor situation and was frustrated by it. He was unable to create a situation that would support his plans. He had, in fact, helped to create the one that defeated him.

Johnson had actually proven that he was more than a politician. Not only interested in his own power, he was also influenced by a doctrine—a doctrine that owed much to the historical experiences of the 1930s and 1940s. "Like most men and women of my generation," he later recalled, "I felt strongly that World War II might have been avoided if the United States had not given such an uncertain signal of its likely response to aggression in Europe and Asia." A product of that era, he could not accept a victory for the "forces of aggression." The lessons of the past, as he and others defined them, controlled his behavior in Southeast Asia and prevented him from behaving in ways that might have enabled him to achieve more success at home, perhaps holding on to the power of the presidency for another term.

As President, Johnson had acquired an unusually large amount of power and had used it to promote change. But he had tried to do more than the resources of his nation, his office, and his talents would allow. He had not adequately appreciated the limits on his power. He had tried to control events thousands of miles from home at the same time that he attempted to reshape the life of his own nation. He sought to make the United States both a global power and a Great Society, but he discovered, as he had feared he would, that the two goals were in direct conflict.

## Chapter 16

# The Troubles and Triumphs of Richard Nixon

Nixon came to power with only minority support and the opposition party in control of Congress, hardly the circumstances likely to result in effective leadership in troubled times. Four years later, however, he appeared to have triumphed over the troubles. Discontent, one of the main features of American life in the late 1960s, helped him gain access to the White House but, once in office, it also presented serious problems for him. There were conflicting demands for change, and leaders had to cope with widespread skepticism and distrust. Being a leader had become extremely difficult, and mayors, college presidents, even fathers struggled with the problem. Moreover, the troubles did not go away as the sixties gave way to the seventies; in fact, some grew larger. Yet, during his first term and into his second, Nixon achieved some important victories and seemed to be ending the leadership crisis. It appeared he had mastered a situation that had been too tough for Johnson.

For Kennedy and Johnson, the major problems of American life seemed to be slow economic growth, racial discrimination, and poverty. For Nixon, the domestic problems seemed to be inflation and disorder. The differences reflected change in both situation and leaders. Inflation and disorder had not only emerged as problems, but they were the kinds of problems that seemed especially important to Nixon. According to Nixon, the liberals had seriously exaggerated the importance of racism and

poverty in American life and the ability of liberal programs to promote progress and stability. Liberalism, in fact, seemed to be a source of disorder and inflation.

Nixon did not ignore poverty and the cities and actually made significant proposals in these areas. He advocated a Family Assistance Program that would replace existing welfare programs, establish a minimum income guaranteed by the federal government, and encourage, and even compel, welfare recipients to work. But he encountered opposition and delay in the Senate, where both liberals and conservatives found fault with the program. Passed twice by the House, the welfare program died twice in the Senate and was then dropped by the President. He also talked of establishing a "New Federalism" that would "reverse the flow of power to the Federal Government in Washington and channel more power back to the states and localities." But, again, he ran into difficulties. Specific aspects of the program, such as sharing federal revenue with the states, did not get enough support, and New Federalism developed slowly.

These proposals reflected a widespread belief, shared by left and right, that New Deal-type liberalism, with its heavy reliance on the federal government, had failed, but Nixon could not muster the support in Congress to translate his proposals into law. The liberal Democrats saw the ideas as a slap in the face, while conservatives of both parties feared the cost. Moreover, the administration itself did not work hard to build support, for other matters dominated the President's attention.

By 1969, inflation had been rising for nearly three years, and the situation became worse after Nixon became President. Prices jumped 3 percent in 1966 and again in 1967 and 4 percent in 1968. While Nixon hoped to cut taxes, he felt compelled to keep Johnson's surtax as an anti-inflation weapon until the middle of 1970. Disliking price and wage controls, he tried to rely upon fiscal and monetary policies to halt inflation. The Federal Reserve Board provided the tight money policy that he desired in 1969, and he was able to slow the growth of federal expenditures, helped by the declining cost of the war and a willingness to cut the space program. But his accomplishments as an economizer were limited by his own interest in strengthening defenses and by the interest of liberal congressmen in increasing expenditures on domestic programs. Thus, contrary to his hopes, the federal budget remained unbalanced, and prices continued to

rise, moving up 5.6 percent in 1969 and 6.5 percent in 1970. Moreover, unemployment began to grow, reaching 6 percent of the work force before the end of 1970. To economists as well as to others, the economy did not seem as manageable as it had to Kennedy and his economic advisers.

The demand for "law and order" had also been building for several years. It had been a major theme in the campaigns of Goldwater, Wallace, and Reagan, and Nixon used it as an issue in 1968, blaming liberals and the United States Supreme Court, as well as radicals and criminals, for disorder. Some intellectuals, such as Irving Kristol, endorsed similar views.

Nixon's personality affected his use of this issue. Eager for power, he assumed that the world was a hostile and dangerous place and his own life a series of "crises." From the beginning of his political career, he had expressed a recurring theme in American history—a theme that there was an internal threat to the nation. That threat also threatened him, and it was greater now because he was the nation's central and top figure. Lacking the liberal's confidence in the ability of social and economic reform to create an orderly society, he felt a need to be "tough" in dealing with the dangers that surrounded him.

Conflict and disorder persisted after Nixon became President. Rioting in the ghettos had fallen off in 1968 and did not rise again, but, in the spring of 1969, demonstrations took place at Harvard, Cornell, Columbia, Chicago, California, and Stanford, among others, as students continued to protest against the war and other features of life that had troubled them for several years. In the spring of 1970, the National Guard killed six students at Kent State and Jackson State, and demonstrators disrupted academic life at many schools, reacting chiefly to the American-South Vietnamese invasion of Cambodia. In addition, during 1969-1971, demonstrators frequently conducted large protests against the war in Washington, New York, San Francisco, and other places. Radical groups turned increasingly to bomb threats, actual bombings, and other acts of violence. A bombing at the University of Wisconsin, in August 1970, killed a graduate student. On the other side, construction workers in New York City attacked young protesters, and blue-collar workers and others in several cities staged counterdemonstrations.

In his efforts to reestablish order, Nixon employed a number of devices, many of them ineffective. Seeking to honor his com-

mitments to Southern supporters, he sought to relax federal pressure for change in race relations but encountered strong opposition. The Senate frustrated his efforts to weaken the highly successful Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Supreme Court checked his attempt to slow the now impressive pace of school desegregation in the South. In October 1969, the justices ordered that the segregated systems must be ended "at once" and forced the administration to press recalcitrant Southern school districts. Subsequent decisions in the next two years reinforced this ruling. Southern states were forced to take steps, including busing, to repair the effects of segregation, a development that persuaded Nixon to press for legislation that would take the power to order busing away from the courts. The percentage of Southern black school children attending desegregated schools rose to more than 50 percent in 1969; the pace of school desegregation in the South reached a new high the following year, and, by 1972, the dual school system had ceased to be a significant feature of Southern life. In addition, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare pressed vigorously on behalf of "affirmative action" to increase opportunities for blacks and other minorities.

Nixon had greater success in making the Supreme Court more conservative. He regarded its liberal decisions on race and criminals as sources of disorder, and he nominated two conservative Southerners, Clement F. Haynsworth, Jr. and G. Harrold Carswell, for positions on the Court, hoping that their votes would force the Court to behave more sensibly. But the Senate, pressured by the AFL-CIO and the NAACP, rejected these nominations, brushing aside the President's claim that he alone had the power of appointment to the Court. These defeats persuaded him to nominate Warren E. Burger and Harry A. Blackmun of Minnesota, less conservative men with spotless records that made them invulnerable to attack, and the Senate accepted them, enabling Burger to replace Warren as Chief Justice. Before the end of his first term, Nixon made two more appointments to the Court—William Rehnquist and Lewis Powell. Rarely had a President so many opportunities to reshape that institution. The four Nixon appointees customarily voted alike and became the dominant bloc. As a result, the Court, while disappointing Nixon at times, often behaved quite differently than the Warren Court had. While not overturning

the latter's work in race relations, the new Court tended to side with the state rather than with the individual in criminal cases.

In tackling the problem of social disorder, the President relied heavily on two advisers, Vice-President Spiro Agnew and Attorney General John Mitchell. Agnew's attacks on "impudent snobs," "ideological eunuchs," intellectuals, the peace movement, and the news media became well known. While criticized for dividing the country and seeking to intimidate newsmen, he strengthened the administration's position with people who liked Wallace. Undercutting the Alabamian was one of the goals of the administration, and the Vice-President successfully tapped resentments that many people felt and Wallace had been expressing for a decade.

Mitchell also emerged as a major figure in the early years of the Nixon administration. For many observers, he personified the theme of repression that appeared in American life by the beginning of the 1970s. He alarmed civil libertarians with proposals for tough anticrime legislation and the expansion of authority to tap telephones, but he obtained the powers he desired. His department, including the FBI, moved against leaders of SDS, the Yippies, and the Panthers, investigating and infiltrating them, raiding their headquarters and homes, and prosecuting them under the "anti-riot" law that had been passed in 1968. State and local officials, including Mayor Richard Daley of Chicago and President S. I. Hayakawa of San Francisco State University, and police forces and National Guard units cooperated with and supplemented national efforts. The attacks seriously damaged the Black Panthers, killing some, including Fred Hampton of Illinois, and jailing or driving others into exile, including Newton, Seale, and Cleaver. Most Americans approved of the attacks upon such radicals.

Although some observers charged that repression had triumphed, at the beginning of the 1970s, dissent remained a significant part of American life. The courts, in fact, provided protection for peaceful dissenters. The Federal Court of Appeals in Boston reversed the convictions of two foes of the draft, including Dr. Benjamin Spock, the famous pediatrician, who had been convicted of conspiracy to violate the Selective Service Law; the reversal seriously restricted the government's ability to suppress dissent against the war. The Supreme Court also upheld the right of students to engage in peaceful protest.

The United States had not become the "fascist" state that



some critics imagined it would become. Nixon, of course, was criticized and satirized in ways that a leader of a fascist state would not tolerate. Even many Panthers enjoyed victories in the courts, perhaps because they were not the threat to the republic that they hoped or J. Edgar Hoover feared.

Behind the scenes, however, the Nixon administration moved against dissenters in ways that were not known to the public. It developed an elaborate system of domestic intelligence and espionage, supplementing a system already established by the CIA, the FBI, and other agencies. Nixon and his aides were convinced that the life of the Republic and of the administration, and its conception of what must be done in the world, especially in Vietnam, were threatened by radicals. As he would later explain: "I knew that to get the enemy to take us seriously abroad, I had to have enough support at home. They could not feel that they could win in Washington what they could not get on the battlefield."

Nixon not only felt threatened, he also felt inadequately defended. He was not satisfied with the work of the FBI, the CIA, and other intelligence agencies; the judiciary did not appear to recognize the danger; even Mitchell seemed to be a weak reed.

Thus, the President moved quietly to strengthen his defenses. Under his authority, the FBI tapped telephones of several members of the staff of the National Security Council and of several newsmen. This practice, conducted from 1969 to 1971, was done without warrants and was motivated by news leaks of the B-52 raids over Cambodia, a military operation that the administration wanted to conceal from the American people. In 1970, incensed by protests against the American invasion of Cambodia, the President approved a scheme to vastly enlarge the domestic intelligence operations, which involved a number of illegal techniques. Developed by Tom Charles Huston of the White House staff, a lawyer who had been president of the Young Americans for Freedom and an army intelligence officer, the scheme was cancelled because of Hoover's opposition. Hoover already resented CIA encroachment on FBI territory, and he saw the proposal as criticism of him and his agency (which it was). In 1971, following publication, in the *New York Times*, of the "Pentagon Papers," a set of secret documents on the Vietnam War, the White House established a special investigation unit called the "Plumbers," whose function, in part, was to stop leaks.

A history commissioned in 1967 by Secretary McNamara, the papers focused on decisions concerning American involvement in Vietnam and revealed that policymakers had often blundered and misrepresented their moves. Publication infuriated the President; it symbolized the problems posed by intellectuals, holdover government officials, and the media. The Plumbers unit was headed by Egil Krogh and included E. Howard Hunt and G. Gordon Liddy, men with experience in intelligence operations, convinced that the treats were real. Shifting its attention from demonstrations and radicals, the group burglarized the office of the psychiatrist of Daniel Ellsberg, the former employee of the State Department, the Defense Department, and the RAND Corporation responsible for leaking the Pentagon Papers. In June 1972, the Plumbers, financed by the Committee to Reelect the President, broke into Democratic National Headquarters at the Watergate in Washington.

The White House also developed an "enemies list" composed of prominent critics of the administration and planned to use federal machinery, such as the Internal Revenue Service, against them.

Nixon and his aides believed that the existence of a national emergency, created by internal enemies, forced them to take these measures and justified their actions. The system of domestic intelligence and espionage was developed and operated secretly. The President neither explained what was going on, encouraged debate about it, nor sought approval for his moves. Not enough people, he assumed, could be made to realize how dangerous the situation was, and Congress could not be persuaded to pass a law authorizing his moves. Furthermore, he believed, "When the President does it, that means it is not illegal," and unconstitutional means "could become lawful if undertaken for the purpose of preserving the Constitution and the nation."

Nixon's most effective act on behalf of a more orderly society was the winding down of the American role in Vietnam. It was, after all, the chief source of disorder in American life. His move away from military involvement was part of a larger effort to adjust to new realities in international affairs as well as part of the larger effort to reestablish order in American life. His surprising negotiations with China and Russia were other efforts at adjustment. They amounted to attempts to end the cold war, a surprising move for Nixon who had been an unusually militant cold warrior.

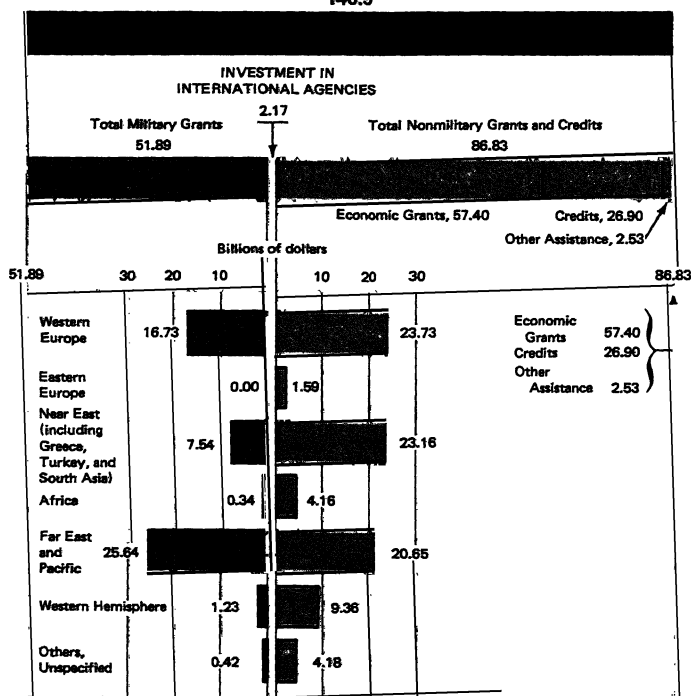
Militant anti-Communism had been a major feature of Nixon's record in American politics. It figured prominently in his first campaign for Congress, the campaign of 1946, and his campaign for the Senate in 1950. He had come to national attention as a leader in the attack on Alger Hiss, and he had been a leading proponent of the theory that Communists influenced the policies of the Democratic administrations. While serving as Vice-President, he had used such themes frequently, and they had continued to be a significant feature of his life in the first half of the 1960s, when he promised the voters of California "the best Communist control of any state in the United States," criticized the Kennedy-Johnson policies as weak and "doomed to failure," and insisted that the American goal must be "nothing less than a free Russia, a free China, a free Eastern Europe, and a free Cuba."

Several forces motivated Nixon's new position, although he never surrendered his conviction that American life was threatened from within. After his seemingly fatal defeat in the campaign for governor of California in 1962, he moved to New York City to join a law firm, gaining an opportunity to improve his relations with the "Eastern establishment." He blamed his poor relations with the establishment for his political troubles, and he now concluded that he must develop a more sophisticated image. His new position also involved a new relationship for him with corporate leaders, who suggested to him that the United States should reduce the costs of its foreign policies and that they should be able to do business everywhere, including Russia and China.

The changed international situation also affected Nixon's thinking. Two powers no longer dominated the world to the degree they had after World War II. American power was reduced by the difficulties in Vietnam and other troubles. In addition, the problems were underscored by the weakness of the dollar and inflation and turmoil in the United States. At the same time, the economic progress of Western Europe had affected the distribution of power in the world, giving France and West Germany, especially, a new sense of independence. Japan had also become stronger, due to economic growth. And the development of conflict between Russia and China meant that Russia was not as strong as it had once been.

By the time Nixon became President, he recognized the out-

IN BILLIONS OF DOLLARS  
TOTAL (NET)  
U.S. FOREIGN AID, 1945-1971  
140.9



*American Foreign Aid, 1945-1971*

lines of the new international situation, and the man chosen as top adviser on foreign affairs—Henry Kissinger—also influenced Nixon's thinking. This ambitious social scientist from Harvard, the Council on Foreign Relations, and the Rockefeller Brothers Fund became the Special Assistant for National Security, a White House staff position, but, eager to wield power, he skillfully made himself more important than the Secretary of State, William Rogers. An admirer of Metternich, Kissinger presented a concept of the importance of leadership in foreign affairs that may have explained his appeal to Nixon, a man who placed foreign relations at the top of his agenda. Kissinger's analyses of international affairs, which emphasized power and its distribution and warned against showing signs of weakness, also

had appeal. He argued that the postwar era of bilateral confrontation was over and maintained that a multipolar world had emerged with five centers of power: the United States, Russia, China, Japan, and Western Europe. Maintaining that the relative power of the United States had declined, he insisted that the nation could not continue to depend so heavily on its own efforts. He also recommended that the United States should take advantage of the conflict between Russia and China, which he regarded as the "deepest international conflict in the world today." International stability, he recommended, should be the American goal, and the five power centers should be balanced with one another. This interpretation of reality resembled Nixon's own concern about instability and presented large opportunities for maneuver. It suggested that the President should have a broad impact on the world and should not merely continue the policies of the past.

Finally, the situation inside the United States affected Nixon. Including great dissatisfaction with American policy in Vietnam, it had given him an unexpected political opportunity by destroying Johnson's career and seriously damaging Humphrey's. He believed that, while he must avoid a retreat to isolation and military weakness, he must find a way out of the war and reduce the costs of the American role in the world.

Influenced by these forces and considerations, Nixon and Kissenger devised a strategy that sought accommodation with Russia and China within the five-power system. The American leaders hoped to play the five powers off against one another, taking advantage of the strengths that the United States had and of the conflicts and weaknesses of the others. In 1970, the President declared:

The United States is confident that tension can be eased and the danger of war reduced by patient and precise efforts to reconcile conflicting interests on concrete issues. . . . Coexistence demands more than a spirit of good will. It requires the definition of positive goals which can be sought and achieved cooperatively. It requires real progress toward resolution of specific differences.

In contrast to the beliefs of their predecessors, the Nixon-Kissinger strategy assumed that Russia and China were concerned with their own well-being and security rather than

dominated by an expansive ideology, and, thus, the United States could successfully negotiate with them.

Accordingly, the President defined a new "doctrine" for Asia. In Vietnam, the United States had not made much progress toward a settlement, for both sides were clinging to hopes for victory. The Nixon administration continued to fight the war, supply aid to the South Vietnamese, and negotiate with the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong. But the President announced a new approach during the summer of 1969. Designed to lower the risks of future Vietnams, the "Nixon Doctrine" promised that the United States would supply a nuclear shield against big power aggression but insisted that countries threatened with other types of aggression must supply the necessary manpower. This meant that the United States would reduce its military role in Asia and rely heavily on others to check the spread of Communism. The "central thesis" of the doctrine, the President explained in 1970:

is that the United States will participate in the defense and development of allies and friends, but that America cannot—and will not—conceive *all* plans, design *all* the programs, execute *all* the decisions and underwrite *all* the defense of the free nations of the world. We will help where it makes a real difference and is considered in our interest.

Following the announcement of the doctrine, the administration withdrew nearly 60,000 American troops from South Korea, Thailand, Japan, and the Philippine Islands by June 1971.

The administration reduced the number of American troops in Vietnam even more sharply. Nixon cut the number from more than 540,000, in January 1969, to about 470,000, a year later; less than 400,000 a year after that, 255,000 by May 1971 and about 50,000 by late 1972.

As Johnson had "Americanized" the war, Nixon attempted to "Vietnamize" it, but he was as determined as Johnson had been to prevent a Communist victory. The President hoped that the United States could both withdraw from the fighting and avoid Communist control of South Vietnam. He hoped to conduct the withdrawal in a way that would not appear to be an American defeat and would not destroy "confidence in American leadership." Greatly concerned about the impact of American

behavior on the rest of the world, he believed that the United States could not end the war quickly. He hoped that a modernized South Vietnamese army supported by American air power and Russian pressure on the North Vietnamese to accept a negotiated settlement would produce the desired results: a compromise peace. Thus, the United States increased the fire power of the Americans that remained in Vietnam and provided the South Vietnamese government with the aid required to strengthen its army.

Although he withdrew American troops, several other moves enlarged the war. American planes continued to bomb South Vietnam heavily, made several attacks upon North Vietnam, escalated activities in Laos, and hit Cambodian targets. Then, beginning on April 30, 1970, American ground and air forces attacked Communist "sanctuaries" in eastern Cambodia. In an operation that lasted two months, American forces destroyed large quantities of supplies, but they also accelerated Communist penetration of Cambodia, a step that endangered the pro-American regime established in March and encouraged the United States to continue air attacks after withdrawing the ground forces. Early in 1971, American forces supported a South Vietnamese invasion of Laos. While South Vietnamese moved in on the ground, Americans operated from the air, using helicopter gunships and B-52 bombers. The administration insisted that all these moves were necessary to safeguard American troops, permit the program of withdrawal to go forward, and bring the war to an end. The President argued that he had authority as commander in chief to act in these ways and did not need the consent of Congress.

Nixon's moves in Indochina received widespread criticism. Critics believed that he did not contemplate a total withdrawal of American forces and was determined to preserve the established regime in control of South Vietnam and to maintain American influence there. They charged that he was only seeking to reach a level of American operations that the American people could tolerate. Moreover, he was pursuing an illusion of victory. Instead, he should encourage and welcome political change.

Liberals tried, by Senate resolutions, to place geographical and time limits on American military operations in Indochina and thereby to reestablish limits on presidential power, but the

President defeated them. He argued that the proposals would prevent him from achieving a satisfactory settlement of the war. He and his supporters also charged that the liberals had become "neo-isolationists" and insisted that the United States could not "renege on its pledges," for advocates of violence everywhere, including the United States, would be encouraged by American failure in Vietnam: "If when the chips are down, the world's most powerful nation . . . acts . . . like a pitiful, helpless giant, the forces of totalitarianism and anarchy will threaten free nations and free institutions throughout the world." Like his postwar predecessors, he was convinced that the United States must demonstrate that it not only had power, but it had the will to use that power. Kissinger backed him up on this point, arguing that "the enormity of modern weapons makes the thought of war repugnant, but the refusal to run any risks would amount to giving the Soviet rulers a blank check." To both men, it seemed obvious that the United States must continually prove its "credibility." The war, and other events, had symbolic and psychological significance.

To liberals, American responsibilities did not seem nearly as great. Communism did not seem as threatening as it seemed to the President or as it had seemed to liberals earlier, and American capabilities seemed smaller. According to the liberals, the United States did not need to, and could not continue to, play the dominant role in world affairs. The tragedy and humiliation of Vietnam was ample proof of that fact. "Most of all," Edmund Stillman wrote, "what seems to have been irretrievably lost in Vietnam is the old American sense of omnipotence on which the national optimism had always . . . been based." The nation needed to cut back rapidly and substantially.

The liberals objected to the nation's numerous treaties and agreements with other nations and to the number of American troops and bases in foreign countries. No other nation ever had so many commitments. The liberal critique involved criticism of reliance on military power as well as criticism of globalism. Criticism of the military-industrial complex had become an integral part of liberal thought. Critics stressed its costs and its power. According to one of the most active critics, Senator William Proxmire of Wisconsin, "there is today unwarranted influence by the military-industrial complex resulting in excessive costs, burgeoning military budgets, and scandalous performances."



Similarly, John Kenneth Galbraith, convinced that the Russians had mellowed and the United States needed to do little to influence political events in other countries and could get along without a large military establishment, argued that the main goal of American politics must be "*to get the military power under firm political control.*" According to liberal critics, the complex had become a threat to the nation, rather than its defender.

While Nixon reversed a trend, he did not go far enough to satisfy the liberals. He stopped the growth of the defense budget, moving it below \$74 billion by fiscal 1971, a drop of nearly \$8 billion in two years. Yet, Nixon and Kissinger, as well as Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird, a former congressman from Wisconsin, did not downplay the importance of military power. In contrast to the McNamara strategy, they wanted to rely more heavily on the manpower of other nations, and, thus, less heavily on American manpower. But military power was important to them, and they were eager to develop and deploy American military technology and maintain American superiority in the weapons of mass destruction. Thus, they converted some of the savings from the drop in the costs of the war into weapons development and deployment.

Nixon's efforts to enlarge the ABM became the focal point in the battle over military spending. Opponents of the ABM argued that the system was unlikely to function successfully without further research and development, was likely to create a false sense of security, and was certain to cost billions of dollars. Based upon McNamara's theory of "mutual assured destruction," liberals argued that rather than channel such a large part of the nation's "increasingly limited resources" into this defense system, the United States should rely upon its deterrent capacity as the primary defense against the threat of nuclear attack.

While the foes of deployment ultimately lost the battle, the ABM controversy was highly significant. It revealed a new skepticism in the Senate toward proposals from the Pentagon. "The time of the blank check is over," Proxmire predicted.

Faced with strong opposition, Nixon looked to the congressional elections of 1970 for a solution. Some evidence suggested the country was in a period of political realignment that could result in a new party balance, with the Republicans replacing the Democrats as the majority party. The Wallace vote suggested

that the South and the blue-collar workers were pulling away from the Democratic party, and a new majority seemed to be taking shape. Composed of "Middle Americans," this majority was not young, not black, and not poor. It was composed of adult, white workers who earned from \$5,000 to \$15,000 per year and were quite concerned about noneconomic or cultural issues: crime, disorder, violence, the sexual revolution, pornography, Vietnam dissent, the generation gap, long hair, drugs, racial unrest, black advance, disruption on the campuses, contempt for middle-class values, and the like. Their possessions and their way of life seemed threatened. Many were ethnic Americans who felt a new sense of identity and pride with their heritages, and also a strong sense of identity with the nation. They strongly resented their critics in the universities and the media who labelled them racists and regarded them as unenlightened and authoritarian. The strength and level of discontent of Middle America was revealed in several municipal elections in 1969 that were won by law-and-order candidates, such as Charles Stenvig, a policeman who became mayor of Minneapolis, and Sam Yorty, who was reelected mayor of Los Angeles. Realignment was especially possible if the Democrats fell under the sway of middle-class liberals and moved left in pursuit of the alienated young and the discontented blacks, while the Republicans sought the votes of Middle America.

Excited by the prospects and convinced that he must at least strengthen his position in the Senate, Nixon threw himself into the congressional elections, combining forces with his Vice-President. Agnew visited more than thirty states while Nixon campaigned in more than twenty. Appealing to what they called the "silent majority" and stressing social issues, they worked especially hard to gain the votes of the white working classes, a group Agnew called "the forgotten men," "the cornerstone of the great silent majority," and "the backbone of America." Identifying liberals with radicals, the campaigners charged that their foes were guilty of softness, permissiveness, and reckless spending, were responsible for disorder, violence, and inflation, and were obstructionists and isolationists who championed dangerous foreign and military policies, discarding the sense of international responsibility the United States had acquired from World War II and its aftermath. Nixon and Agnew also charged that the liberals had switched their stand on law and order. As

the Vice-President expressed this, he was "trying to unpin sheriff's badges from quick-change radical liberals."

The liberal Democrats battled to prevent realignment. Although they continued to call for more rapid withdrawal from Vietnam, a general reduction of the American role in the world, and greater attention to domestic ills, so as to create a just and orderly society, they also paid more attention to social issues, especially crime, than they had in the past. They stressed their own devotion to law, order, and country and challenged the Nixon-Agnew effort to blame them for the nation's domestic difficulties. Recognizing that Middle America was also concerned about economic issues, such as unemployment and inflation, the liberals' concern over the economy increased as the campaign moved along. They also worked especially hard for the votes of the white working class, acknowledging that it had been the largest component of the Democratic coalition since the days of Franklin Roosevelt and was especially vulnerable to Republican appeals on social issues. In addition, they received strong help from organized labor, even though some friction had developed between liberals and the labor movement, especially on the war.

Although strengthening Nixon slightly in the Senate, the election did not reveal a massive swing to the right. The Democrats remained the majority party. Their majority in the Senate dropped by only two, while their majority in the House was enlarged by nine. In addition, the Democrats regained control of the governorships, moving from eighteen to twenty-nine. Nixon's appeals to the South had failed. While he enjoyed victories in the gubernatorial and senatorial elections in Tennessee, Republican governors failed in reelection bids in Arkansas and Florida. The GOP did not realize any gains in Texas, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina and added only one Southern seat in the House. The Republican bid for the working-class vote also failed. In addition, blacks, including the largest black vote yet in Southern history, continued to give almost all their votes to Democratic candidates. The rural Middle West also provided significant support for the Democratic party. Most of its gains in the House came in this region.

The results encouraged Democrats and imposed new pressures on the President. Many Democrats concluded that

their party could regain control of the White House in 1972—if it could avoid damaging internal conflict. And the President concluded that he must reduce unemployment significantly before election day. Thus, although inflation still haunted the nation, he became more willing to tolerate a budget deficit, even declared that he was now a “Keynesian,” and encouraged the Federal Reserve Board to increase the money supply. He also appointed a shrewd and ambitious Texas Democrat, John Connally, as Secretary of the Treasury. To combat inflation, which was escalating, and eliminate the deficit in the nation’s international balance of payments, as well as increase jobs, Nixon announced a new economic program in the summer of 1971. Despite his earlier opposition to controls, the program included a temporary freeze on prices and wages. The international economic policies, which were influenced by the inadequacies of American sales abroad relative to the flow of dollars to other countries, included an import surtax and devaluation of the dollar. Developed without any consultation, these policies troubled America’s allies, especially the Japanese who began to reexamine their relations with the United States and other nations. In addition, the unemployment policies failed to satisfy labor and liberals. The anti-inflation program, however, dropped the price rise from 7 percent in 1971 to 4 percent in 1972.

Before the end of 1971, Nixon had begun even more spectacular efforts to improve relations with Russia and China. Early in his administration, the United States had negotiated with the Russians on arms and other issues, and the President had begun to talk of the “People’s Republic of China” rather than “Red China.” In 1970, he had announced that “No nation need be our permanent enemy.” American officials conducted formal talks with the mainland Chinese in Warsaw, and the administration eased trade restrictions against them.

Shortly thereafter, Nixon decided to take a major step. Influenced by the situation in Vietnam as well as the larger international situation, he decided to visit China. The visit was arranged by Kissinger, without consultation with allies or the State Department, and announced on July 15, 1971. The visit took place in February 1972, and it was the first by an American President. It involved a round of festivities and meetings with Chinese officials. The President proclaimed that there was “no reason for us to be enemies” and even quoted Mao on television.

The spectacle caused a disgruntled conservative journalist to complain: "He would toast Alger Hiss tonight, if he could find him." The event shocked the left as well as the right, for China had been the country most admired by the New Left and China now seemed to be betraying the world revolution. Nixon and the Chinese reached an agreement on Taiwan, the most troublesome issue in American-Chinese relations, largely because the United States supported the Taiwanese military forces. They agreed that Taiwan should be an integral part of the People's Republic but that change would have to be peaceful. They also expressed opposition to "foreign domination" of "any independent country" and efforts by any nation to establish "hegemony in the Asia-Pacific region." Soon after the visit, the Chinese agreed to buy ten American passenger planes, and the two countries made additional progress toward the resumption of formal diplomatic relations. Most Americans approved of these actions.

In May, shortly after his trip to China, Nixon visited the Soviet Union. While seeking political dividends at home, he also hoped to encourage the Russians to behave in a cautious, restrained way beyond their borders, and he assumed that their concern about China and desire for trade strengthened his hand. Yet, the parties could not reach agreements on Vietnam or Russian-American trade, even though the American negotiators tried to link the Russian interest in trade, rooted in Russian economic troubles, with the American interest in ending Russian aid to North Vietnam. They agreed on some joint projects and signed a Strategic Arms Limitation Agreement, which had been taking shape for several years and sought to avoid an upset of the nuclear balance. SALT attacked ABMs more than offensive missiles and permitted the Russians to have more ICBMs. The conferees also reached a settlement on Lend-Lease that opened up the possibility of new loans from the United States. Nixon and his Russian counterpart, Leonid Brezhnev, proclaimed their belief in "peaceful coexistence" and their desire to avoid moves that could generate international tension leading to military confrontation. The visit was followed by a large sale of American wheat to the Russians, who faced a severe food crisis. Nixon advised the American people that the conference opened up the possibility of a "new structure of peace," and his popularity rose significantly.

The conference produced results in other places as well. In Egypt, President Anwar Sadat expelled Soviet military advisers.

He hoped, apparently, that the Americans could be more helpful than the Russians in his territorial disputes with Israel.

The summit meeting also had an impact on Vietnam, where it helped the United States move toward a negotiated settlement. In the spring, in response to another major offensive by Communist forces, Nixon again authorized massive bombing of North Vietnam and the mining of Haiphong harbor, a long contemplated but often rejected move that risked confrontation with Russia, since the Russians used the port to supply North Vietnam. In other words, the action challenged the Russians as well as the North Vietnamese and was designed to demonstrate to both countries America's and Nixon's toughness. The negotia-



*President Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger (Dennis Brack/Black Star)*

tions, with Kissinger as the chief American negotiator, were deadlocked over the demand for the removal of the South Vietnamese leader, Thieu. The move was necessary, due to the authoritarian character of his regime, if free elections were to be held, but it would also symbolize defeat for the United States. Progress was made, however, when the Russians decided not to cancel Nixon's visit in response to the bombing and mining. Russia's behavior meant that she was not giving as much support to the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong as they expected and needed.

Late in October, the two sides agreed to a cease-fire, a development that encouraged Kissinger to announce that "peace was at hand." The negotiators had agreed that the "two present administrations of South Vietnam" would "hold consultations" and schedule general elections—agreements that meant the North Vietnamese had given up their demand for the resignation of Thieu and the United States had surrendered its opposition to recognition of the Viet Cong as the equal of his regime. The negotiators also agreed that North Vietnam could keep its troops in South Vietnam during the truce period, thereby gaining an opportunity to influence the elections.

With American elections close at hand, Nixon's moves at home and abroad put him in a strong position, even though some efforts had failed, including the party realignment project and the anticrime campaign. The administration, in fact, could do little about crime, since the area lay largely within the responsibility of state and local officials. The federal government could do something about drug traffic, and, influenced by a theory that addicts were largely responsible for urban crime, the administration tried to reduce the number of addicts by blocking the flow of drugs, creating new institutional devices for an anti-drug campaign, and using the media to generate public alarm about the "drug menace." Based upon a false theory and plagued by conflict among agencies, the campaign resulted in arrests but did not reduce urban crime.

Demonstrations, however, had largely ended by 1972, in part because of administration policies. The New Left had collapsed as a political force because of both external pressures and its own weaknesses. Similar to other radical movements, it experienced intense internal conflict. Blacks, women, gays, Indians, Mexican-Americans, and Puerto Ricans challenged the white middle-class males who dominated the movement, and each

group concluded that it needed its own movement. And the champions of instant cultural revolution, the Yippies, led by Jerry Rubin and Abbie Hoffman, challenged the emphasis on political action. Two groups quarrelled with SDS's emphasis on nonviolent revolution led by students allied with the new working class. The Progressive Labor party saw the blue-collar workers as the key, assumed that they could become revolutionaries, gained control of SDS in 1969, but could not hold on to the support of all its members. And an SDS faction, led by Mark Rudd and Bernadine Dohrn, among others, emphasized violence and called for a worldwide revolution based chiefly in the underdeveloped countries and the underdeveloped parts of the United States and aided by the young white revolutionaries here. Rudd and his associates assumed that working class youth would rally behind them as they demonstrated their toughness and bravery; they felt no need to gain the support of white workers generally, since they had been corrupted by the goods supplied by imperialistic capitalism. In 1969, they became the Weathermen and engaged in a series of bombings, during the next two years, that were criticized by other radicals as adventuristic, insane, and cruel. Finally, the Weathermen became disillusioned with violence: it failed to accomplish their aims, encouraged the police to hit them hard, and resulted in death for several members.

Although some people in the New Left hoped to gain working-class support, the movement, like earlier forms of radicalism, failed to do so. It antagonized rather than attracted workers. Disruption, violence, and the lifestyle of many radicals offended them. Moreover, in seeking working-class support, the New Left, as many of its theorists recognized, had to compete against the attraction of materialism that the system offered.

The New Left also lost to rally college students. Influenced by the winding war and the draft, students were also affected by a recession in the economy. They became more concerned with economic matters than they had been in the 1960s and about political activities. By 1972, the left could no longer count on demonstrations on college campuses.

Disillusionment with radical political action also affected many members. Knowing little about history, they learned from failures that it was difficult to



produce large-scale changes. Some, like Rudd, went underground to avoid jail, and plotted guerrilla warfare. The cult of violence lived on in groups like the Symbionese Liberation Army (SLA), a Bay Region group that came to national attention in 1973-1974 by murdering a progressive black educator in Oakland and abducting Patricia Hearst, the daughter of a wealthy newspaper publisher. But at its peak, the SLA had no more than thirty members.

Many people dropped out of the New Left movement. Some shifted their attention to specific issues, like women's liberation or the environment; some went to live in communes or joined cults, and others moved into the mainstream of American life. Some of the latter group, including Seale, Newton, and other surviving Panthers, turned to more conventional politics; many of them concentrated on the reform of the Democratic party and the defeat of Nixon. Some explicitly repudiated the New Left, seeing it as unrealistic; others found refuge in what was defined as American Populism, a reformist tradition focused on economic problems, especially economic privilege.

Former radicals and regular Democrats, however, did not defeat Nixon. In November, he won by a wide margin, obtaining nearly 61 percent of the popular vote and 521 of the 538 electoral votes. He only lost Massachusetts, carrying all the South, as well as areas in which the Republicans had traditionally demonstrated strength. Many Democrats, white workers, and Catholics as well as Southerners, voted for Nixon.

Nixon won despite the weaknesses of his own party, which failed to gain control of Congress. The House, which had been divided 254 to 180, was now divided 244 to 191, while the Senate shifted from 54 Democrats, 44 Republicans, and 2 independents to 56 Democrats and 42 Republicans, along with the 2 independents. In the nation as a whole, the Democrats increased their governorships to 31. Obviously, many voters split their tickets.

Nixon won in part because of his own efforts and accomplishments. The administration had worked hard to project an attractive image of itself. Exploiting the media, while at the same time castigating them, the White House portrayed the administration as the promoter of peace and protector of law and liberty and painted its enemies in dark colors. Nixon's opposition to proposals for social change—to establishment of a federal system of day-care centers and to relaxation of laws on

abortion, marijuana, and pornography—and his defense of the work ethic, the family, organized religion, and traditional morality exerted some influence. His promotion of political stability, slowing of inflation, withdrawal of Americans from Vietnam, and improvements in relations with Russia and China had a strong effect on many voters, as was indicated by the sharp increase in his popularity from the summer of 1971 to the summer of 1972. He seemed headed toward victory even before the Democrats selected their candidate.

The Democrats also helped the President by nominating a candidate who could not make a Truman- or Humphrey-type comeback in the campaign. They could not nominate their most popular candidate, Senator Edward Kennedy, for he had been politically hurt by an auto accident at Chappaquiddick in 1969 that resulted in the death of a young woman. They rejected Senator Edmund Muskie of Maine, who had been damaged by a public display of emotion and, as a man of the center, could not capture the support of a zealous band of workers in the emotional circumstances of 1972. They rejected Senator Humphrey, who was harmed by his identification with the past, and they rejected Governor Wallace, who, in addition to espousing policies that many Democrats found distasteful, had been crippled by an assassin's bullets during the primaries. The party chose Senator George McGovern of South Dakota, a candidate who called for faster withdrawal from the war, cuts in military spending, and concentration upon domestic problems.

Backed by reformers, McGovern benefited from recent changes in the rules of the Democratic party. He had come from far back in the pack in a two-year campaign that focused its appeal on the poor, the minorities, the young people, and the antiwar movement, not the traditional Democratic coalition. Most party leaders, labor leaders, city bosses, and Southerners opposed him, but the changes in the convention rules, which had been drafted since 1968 under his leadership, resulted in a convention composed of many more women, blacks, and young people and fewer representatives of unions and city machines than in the past. There were also many more prosperous and college-educated people than in the population as a whole or in the traditional Democratic party. His ardent supporters represented a new brand of liberalism that had emerged out of the turmoil of the 1960s. They rejected the traditional liberal

platform of reform at home and action abroad and the traditional liberal dependence on the urban working classes and the labor movement. They wanted a sharp reduction in the American role in the world, amnesty for draft dodgers and deserters, busing as a means of racial integration, tax and welfare reform, consumer protection, conservation, liberalization of the laws on marijuana and abortion, improvements in the status of women, young people and minorities, and protection and enlargement of civil liberties.

Troubles plagued McGovern during the postconvention period. He was hurt by the forced resignation of his running mate, Thomas Eagleton of Missouri, who left the ticket because of the notoriety past health problems received in the press, and he disillusioned some supporters by making concessions to foes in a quest for party unity. His handling of these matters made him seem weak and indecisive to many voters. And he seemed incapable of speaking as effectively to the public at large as he had spoken to the people responsible for his nomination. He could not draw people away from Nixon, not even by charging that Nixon was corrupt and oppressive and had not made the world more peaceful and prosperous.

Most important, McGovern could not rally traditional Democrats behind him as Truman had in 1948 and Humphrey had in 1968. Thus, he remained as far behind on election day as he had been on the day he was nominated. Despite his South Dakota and Methodist background, to many Democrats he seemed to represent the forces of rebellion. To many workers, Catholics, Jews, and Southerners, he seemed moralistic and impractical and appeared to represent only one faction of the party. Many Democrats believed the McGovernites were hostile toward and contemptuous of others, a threat to their values and life-styles, uninterested in the real problems of working-class people, and likely to pursue foreign policies that would lead to a Communist takeover in South Vietnam and would deprive Israel of the support it would need to survive in a crisis.

Contributing to McGovern's problems was the assumption, which turned out to be false, that young people would supply the necessary power base. It was based in part upon the fact that the people aged eighteen to twenty years old had recently obtained the right to vote. An unexpectedly small percentage of the young people voted, however, helping to make 1972 a low turnout elec-

tion in which only 55 percent of those who were eligible voted, the lowest turnout since 1948. Moreover, the young people who did vote divided about evenly, failing to give McGovern the overwhelming support that his backers anticipated.

Nixon's campaign also contributed to his victory. Backed up by a record amount of money, he moved cautiously. Seeking an ideological and personal victory rather than a victory for his party, he supplied little help to Republicans, cultivated Democrats, and identified himself with those groups that felt threatened by the McGovern forces. He also denied that the White House had been involved in the Watergate break in.

The election gave Nixon a sense of great satisfaction and personal power. He had found room to maneuver, for the Democrats, although in control of Congress, were obviously in a state of disarray and certain to clash over party rules, constituencies, issues, and presidential candidates. And he had the powers of the presidency more firmly in his hands than before, given the contrast between his victories of 1968 and 1972. In fact, he regarded himself as largely above criticism, since the people had spoken so clearly in support of him. He believed he had a mandate to rule as he wished. Thus, he made plans for a stepped-up campaign against the media, which seemed to him to be led by his enemies, moved forward with efforts to scrap some Great Society programs and turn others over to the states and cities through the revenue-sharing system, and also pressed for the strengthening of American military forces, through a larger defense budget and new weapons and delivery systems, including a new bomber, the B-1. In addition, he increased pressure for reorganization of what was another source of difficulty for him—the federal bureaucracy, seeking to subordinate it effectively to the White House.

Soon after his reelection, Nixon ended American military participation in the Vietnam War. Thieu resisted the agreement that had been reached in October, even though it would leave him in a fairly strong position, and the North Vietnamese also delayed the final settlement, hoping that the United States would abandon Thieu. In response, Nixon put some pressure on the South Vietnamese government and authorized heavy bombing of North Vietnam, including Hanoi and Haiphong in late December. The final settlement came in January. It enabled Thieu to stay in power, permitted the North Vietnamese and the

Viet Cong to hold on to recent territorial gains, recognized the existence of two South Vietnamese "parties," obliged them to organize "free and democratic general elections," was vague on treatment of political prisoners, and agreed that each side would return its prisoners of war. Informal parts of the understanding promised reconstruction aid to North Vietnam if the settlement held and threatened renewed bombing if it did not. The settlement was followed by the exchange of prisoners and the final withdrawal of American forces.

Nixon appeared to have ended the leadership crisis. Maneuvering skillfully through turbulent waters, he had calmed them somewhat, enjoyed a landslide victory at the polls, and pulled American forces out of Vietnam without giving the Communists complete control. By early 1973, according to the pollsters, nearly 70 percent of the people approved of his performance, and, in February, *Time* designated Nixon and his top advisor, Henry Kissinger, as its "men of the year."

## Chapter 17

### The Persistence of the Leadership Crisis

Nixon's solution to the leadership crisis turned out to be an illusion. People who lacked confidence in him, and others as well, produced evidence, during 1973-1974, that proved he had abused his power, and, as the evidence piled up, his effectiveness declined and confidence in him disappeared. Finally, he was persuaded to resign from office rather than suffer impeachment and removal. His successor, Gerald Ford, restored some of the lost prestige to the presidency. But, serving in an enormously difficult situation, Ford proved incapable of holding on for long to the confidence of most people or to the presidency.

Pressures against Nixon came from several directions in 1973. The Washington police, tipped off by a watchman, had apprehended the Watergate burglars. The *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and other papers, not satisfied with official explanations, had probed the episode, and McGovern had made charges about it. The men caught in the break-in were prosecuted early in 1973, with the prosecutor relying heavily on evidence supplied by the FBI, which had been investigating the case, although not very diligently. The trial revealed that the men had received money from the Committee to Reelect the President (CRP) and that two had been officials of the committee. The federal district judge involved in the case, John J. Sirica, pressed those who were convicted or pleaded guilty to tell all they knew. One of them, James McCord, Jr., formerly an

employee of the CIA and then an official of CRP, charged that John Mitchell and two members of the White House staff, Jeb Stuart Magruder and John Dean, had been involved in planning the break-in. Under pressure from the prosecutors, Mitchell, Magruder, and Dean, the last fearing his associates were plotting to pin the blame on him, testified about their own activities and those of others, including H. R. (Bob) Haldeman and John Ehrlichman, the top men on the White House staff. A televised investigation by a special Senate Committee headed by Democratic Senator Sam J. Ervin of North Carolina produced spectacular episodes: Dean's charges that Nixon had been involved in the cover-up of the White House role; Ehrlichman's reliance on national security to defend the administration's actions; and the revelation that conversations in the White House had been recorded on tapes, apparently to guarantee Nixon an accurate record of what was said there. Additional pressure came from a special prosecutor, Archibald Cox, whose investigation went beyond Watergate to campaign and personal finances. In addition to these public figures, more obscure people in different parts of the federal bureaucracy, including the FBI and the IRS, feeling threatened by some of Nixon's moves and schemes, leaked damaging information to the press and others.

All these efforts produced several disclosures. They involved irregularities in the financing of the 1972 campaign and the use of campaign funds to finance the Plumbers; the use of political espionage and "dirty tricks" by campaign workers; the burglarizing of the office of Ellsberg's psychiatrist, and the offer of the directorship of the FBI to the judge in the Ellsberg case during the course of the trial. Other disclosures included insufficient tax payments by the President, large government expenditures on his homes, the secret bombing of Cambodia, and the development of an enemies list and plans to use the Internal Revenue Service against the President's enemies. The disclosures did not, however, define Nixon's role in the break-in and cover-up.

Under these pressures, the administration crumbled. The process began quietly, with the forced resignation of Charles Colson, and it completely emerged into public view late in April 1973, when Nixon forced Haldeman, Ehrlichman, Dean, and Richard Kleindienst, the attorney general, to resign, hoping thereby to end his troubles. These resignations were quickly followed by many others, the reshuffling of people who remained,

and difficulties in finding replacements. In October, Agnew resigned, after having been accused of taking bribes and pleading no contest to charges of income tax evasion. The "Saturday Night Massacre," as the episode was called, took place when Nixon asked his new Attorney General, Elliott Richardson, to fire Cox who refused to back down from efforts to gain access to the tapes and other sources. Richardson and his top aide, William Ruckelshaus, resigned rather than fire Cox, and the President had to turn to a third official to accomplish the task. By the summer of 1974, thirty-eight former officials had either pleaded guilty to charges or been indicted.

As the administration crumbled, the President's popularity and effectiveness declined, and problems piled up. While nearly 70 percent of the people approved of his conduct early in 1973, only 27 percent did so a year later. Hoping to regain popularity and to turn attention away from the scandal, he denied that he had authorized the Ellsberg burglary or the Watergate break-in or had been involved in the efforts to conceal White House participation, and he rationalized the actions of his aides as natural reactions to the left's behavior. But he had lost his charm.

Inflation reemerged as a major problem. Nixon relaxed controls, which he never liked, after inflation slowed, and prices soared by nearly 8 percent in 1973 and escalated well above 10 percent the following year.

At the same time, the situation in Vietnam deteriorated once again, and Nixon could not deal forcefully with the problem. Still fearing the consequences of American weakness and defeat, he remained determined to avoid complete Communist control of Vietnam. He insisted that Thieu remain in control of a portion of Vietnam, and he provided him with funds, supplies and advisers. Thieu, equally determined, continued to use his power to remove his political foes, non-Communists as well as Communists, from South Vietnamese political life, while the Communists continued to maneuver for supremacy. The parties failed to reach an agreement on the political future of South Vietnam and the means of reaching it. Fighting resumed in a major way in the fall of 1973. But the President could not reintroduce American forces into the battle because Congress had passed a War Powers Act, over Nixon's veto in August, forbidding such action—it was clearly a victory for the liberals who had been seeking such legislation for three years. In any event,



Nixon would not have sent in American ground forces, which would have overturned his efforts to recreate an orderly society, but he would have used air and naval power, which were stationed within striking distance.

In October, troubles also erupted in the Middle East. Another Arab-Israeli war broke out, the fourth since the establishment of Israel in 1948. It forced the administration, operating largely through Kissinger, who was now Secretary of State, to struggle to produce a cease-fire in order to avoid a Russian-American confrontation. Even though President Anwar Sadat of Egypt had expelled Russian advisers in 1972, the Russians were still involved with the Arabs, chiefly as a source of arms and advisers, but they also advocated attacks upon Israel. With the war going badly for Israel at first, the administration airlifted supplies, thereby helping to turn the war around. However, Kissinger grew fearful that the Russians would intervene militarily, and Nixon, therefore, put American forces throughout the world on alert, a move that skeptics, now a large group, interpreted as designed to divert attention from his troubles at home. When Russia concluded that Egypt faced disaster, the two superpowers, with the United States pressing Israel to exercise restraint, worked out a cease-fire. But Kissinger, although rather successful in efforts to widen the gap between Egypt and Russia, failed to develop a permanent settlement that would resolve differences over Israel's right to exist, its boundaries, and the rights of the Palestinian Arabs.

In the midst of the war, a new problem arose, and Nixon could not respond with an acceptable solution. Predictions of an "energy crisis," which had been made in recent months, took on new meaning as the Arabs, hoping to drive support away from Israel, imposed a temporary embargo on the export of oil to the United States and other countries. A group formed several years earlier, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), demonstrated its strength by raising crude oil prices. The administration did not forcefully pressure the Arabs to change their oil policies. Instead, breaking with the strenuous efforts in recent years to gain access for American companies to the Middle Eastern oil fields, it called for action, chiefly higher prices for oil producers in the U.S., that could free the U.S. from dependence on Middle Eastern oil. But Nixon had lost credibility, and many people did not believe his claim that the nation

faced an energy crisis. As a result, he could not build adequate support for his proposals.

Kissinger's failure to improve relations with Europe was further evidence that the administration's talents had declined. During the first term, European-American relations had been subordinated to interest in Vietnam, China, and Russia; disagreements among the Western allies on Vietnam, Israel, economic policies, and other matters had multiplied; and the sense of dependence on one another had declined, in part, because fear of Russia had also declined. At the outset of the second term, Kissinger had decided to pay more attention to Europe, even calling 1973 the "year of Europe," but he accomplished little. In fact, by late 1973, the two sides were clashing over the Middle East and oil policies. The following year, West Europeans, suffering even more than Americans from OPEC policies, attempted to work out their own deal with the Arabs. Nixon denounced the action, insisting that since the Europeans depended on the United States for security, they must cooperate with the nation economically as well.

Nixon's Secretary of Defense, James R. Schlesinger, also experienced frustration. Troubled by the progress of the Russian missile program since SALT, he proposed additional missiles so that the United States could destroy Russian missile sites, as well as Russian cities, which would put the United States into a stronger bargaining position. But he encountered strong opposition from critics who insisted that the nation had more than enough military power and should be scaling down military spending now that American participation in Vietnam had ended.

Developments at home alarmed Secretary of State Kissinger. The "disintegration of Executive authority that resulted from Watergate" was especially troublesome to him, and, when investigators publicized the fact that some of the officials whose phones had been tapped had been his aides, and that he had been partly responsible, he threatened to resign. "It is impossible and incompatible with the dignity of the United States," he proclaimed in a highly emotional press conference in June 1974, "to have its senior official and have its Secretary of State under this sort of attack in the face of the dangers we confront and the risks that may have to be run and the opportunities that may have to be seized."

Kissinger's appeal failed to check the downward spiral. In fact, at that time, the House of Representatives was moving toward impeachment. Opponents of impeachment argued that Nixon's guilt had not been established and the process would be damaging, rendering the government ineffective and embarrassing the United States. On the other hand, advocates insisted that impeachment was necessary to reestablish the constitutional presidency, an institution of more limited powers than Nixon claimed, more accountable to the people. Arthur M. Schlesinger wrote, if members of Congress "decide not to hold Mr. Nixon and his successors accountable except every four years, they will license the imperial Presidency, usher in a new and ominous time for the republic, and transform the balance and character of our constitutional order." Responding to such demands, the House Judiciary Committee, headed by Peter Rodino, a Democrat from New Jersey, turned to the question of impeachment in May 1974. Several Republican members defended the President, admitting that members of the administration had behaved unethically or illegally but arguing that the offenses were not impeachable. They claimed that Nixon's guilt had not been established. A bipartisan majority, however, endorsed articles of impeachment, charging that the President had "prevented, obstructed, and impeded the administration of justice, . . . repeatedly engaged in conduct violating the constitutional rights of citizens, impairing the due and proper administration of justice in the conduct of lawful inquiries, and contravening the law of governing agencies of the executive branch and the purposes of those agencies." He had also "failed without lawful cause or excuse to produce papers and things, as directed by the Committee of the Judiciary . . . , and willfully disobeyed such subpoenas." The majority concluded that Nixon had "acted in a manner contrary to his trust as President and subversive of constitutional government, to the great prejudice of the cause of law and justice, and to the manifest injury of the people of the United States." Thus, he warranted "impeachment and trial and removal from office." The articles had strong public support and seemed certain to be passed by the full House.

Before the House had an opportunity to act, Nixon encountered difficulties with the United States Supreme Court. He had frequently relied on the doctrine of "executive privilege" to resist

requests for tapes and documents and had responded to pressure by releasing some tapes and edited transcripts of others. Even the materials he released, though designed to show that he had no knowledge of the cover-up before March 21, 1973 and to clear him of other charges, damaged him; they revealed that he used coarse language and "hush money." But the special prosecutor, Leon Jaworski, a Texas lawyer and Cox's replacement, needed more evidence. He had believed, at first, that Nixon was innocent and had been victimized by his staff but was quickly persuaded that he was involved in the cover-up. Although he proceeded cautiously in hopes of minimizing the damage to the government, Jaworski turned to the judiciary to gain access to needed material, arguing that the supremacy of law over men was involved but encountering arguments about the separation of powers and executive privilege. On July 24, the Supreme Court, by a vote of 8 to 0, with three of Nixon's appointees voting in the affirmative, ordered the President to turn over the tapes to Judge Sirica. He would make the relevant portions available to Jaworski who, in turn, could make them available to Congress.

Pressed by his aides to comply with the Court's ruling, Nixon, on August 5, made public his conversations with Haldeman and Dean just after the break-in. It was these revelations that destroyed the President's support. They contradicted not only his initial denial of White House involvement but his subsequent insistence that he had not known of that involvement until March 1973 and had made every effort to obtain the facts and punish the guilty. The tapes, which he had not destroyed, proved that he had obstructed justice, promoting the cover-up from the beginning. On June 23, 1972, he had decided to have the CIA persuade the FBI to drop its investigation. He later had advised his aides to perjure themselves. The tapes also proved that he had lied repeatedly, fearing the damage that could be done to him and his administration. His defenders in the Judiciary Committee now announced that they favored impeachment; several Republican congressional leaders, including Senator Goldwater, advised Nixon that his removal from office was a certainty, and top White House aides advised him to resign.

Under these pressures, Nixon announced his resignation on August 8, 1974. He admitted only to "errors in judgment," denied that the acts revealed by the tapes justified "the extreme

step of impeachment," called attention to his accomplishments, especially in foreign affairs, and explained that he was resigning because he "no longer [had] a strong political base in Congress." He had crumbled emotionally and was convinced, it appears, that his enemies of long standing—the liberals, the "establishment," the media—had exploited Watergate to destroy him. "I gave them a sword, and they stuck it in, and they twisted it with relish," he would declare later.

Although the first President to resign, Nixon was the second President in a row to fail, despite impressive accomplishments. Both Johnson and Nixon had behaved in unexpected and shocking ways. Johnson had promised restraint and then had escalated and Americanized the Vietnam War. Nixon had promised law and order and then had encouraged the breaking of the law and had protected lawbreakers. Such experiences disillusioned the American people and seriously damaged the presidency and other institutions. By the summer of 1974, the leadership crisis was extremely severe.

Nixon's successor, Gerald Ford, had many obstacles to overcome. He had never been elected to nation-wide office. A veteran congressman from Grand Rapids, Michigan, first elected in



*Ford Takes Command (Dennis Brack/Black Star)*

1948, he had risen to the post of minority leader as a loyal party man, not as a promoter of major legislation. Appointed after Agnew's resignation, he had been forced to play the difficult role of Vice-President in a collapsing regime. Soon after entering the White House, he weakened himself by pardoning Nixon of any crimes he might have committed against the United States. Influenced, perhaps, by alarm over Nixon's emotional state, he argued that the former President had suffered enough, and that the nation should be spared a long and divisive trial. Many Americans regarded the pardon as evidence of a deal, considering it unfair. Some of Nixon's former associates, including Ehrlichman, Haldeman, and Mitchell, would shortly be spending terms in jail; some would gain their revenge by writing bitter, anti-Nixon books. The pardon produced a sharp drop in Ford's popularity. In a related move, Ford gave Nixon control of the tapes during his lifetime, authorizing their destruction, but this act was overturned by Congress and the Court. In November, Ford suffered politically as a result of what Nixon had done to the Republican party. The congressional elections enlarged already substantial Democratic majorities. Throughout his period as chief executive, Ford suffered from the damage Nixon had done to the presidency, for the desire to reassert authority in Congress affected the nation's politics.

Already hurt by the pardon and the agreement on the tapes, Ford did not know how to exploit a situation to his advantage, as indicated by his selection of a Vice-President. His choice was Nelson Rockefeller, the fabulously wealthy governor of New York, which infuriated conservative Republicans without gaining much applause from any other quarter. The conservatives regarded Rockefeller as dangerously liberal, but liberals did not view him as a liberal of any type. His performance satisfied neither group, and his reputation suffered because he left behind massive problems in New York State and New York City.

Ford, a long-time supporter of an active American role in the world backed up by military strength, had little success in foreign affairs. A deteriorating situation in Vietnam greeted him when he took office, and it only grew worse. The fighting continued; the Communists embarked upon a new offensive in 1975; Congress refused to appropriate the aid requested by the administration, in order to fulfill a commitment made in 1973. Thieu attached some of his best troops to Saigon to save his regime

from a military putsch; his other troops in the north panicked and fled, as did more than a million civilians. Thus, with surprising ease, the Communists gained complete control of Vietnam in April.

At last it was clear that the United States had lost a war, a fact that had been obscured when the troops were withdrawn in 1973. This latest development, however, did not trigger a great debate over where the responsibility for the defeat lay. In the early 1970s, prophets had predicted that if the Viet Cong won in South Vietnam, some Americans would accuse others of treason; of betraying the country, of responsibility for the "loss" of Indochina; anti-intellectualism would flourish as intellectuals were blamed for the failure to win, and a "stab-in-the-back myth" would emerge and influence behavior. Perhaps the prediction did not work out because both Republicans and Democrats recognized that responsibility was not one-sided. Perhaps, however, it was because Ford rather than Nixon was in office. It seems likely that a powerful Nixon would have blamed others and exploited the opportunity for recrimination. Although some Republicans blamed the Democratic Congress, Ford quickly suggested that it would be harmful to look back; he urged the nation to forget the past and focus on the future.

By the time Thieu fell, the Communists had also triumphed in Cambodia. Liberals as well as Ford and Kissinger were now concerned that events in Indochina might be interpreted as "the failure of American will," and Ford seized an opportunity to be forceful. "The United States must carry out some act somewhere in the world which shows its determination to continue to be a world power," Kissinger had reportedly told a journalist. And, in May, Ford, paying no more than lip service to the War Powers Act, sent Marines to rescue an American merchant ship, the *Mayaguez*, and its crew that had been seized by a Cambodian naval vessel. Ford proclaimed that the episode, which involved heavy casualties, demonstrated American strength and determination. A few critics were alarmed by the move, seeing it as a rash act that might be followed by others, perhaps in Korea where the situation had once again grown tense, and a few congressmen criticized the President for violation of the War Powers Act. But most Americans supported him, regarding the event as a much needed victory for the United States, even though Cambodia was a small country. Other nations, however, were not impressed.

The President relied heavily on Kissinger, who had survived the troubles of the Nixon administration and continued to serve as Secretary of State. In fact, Kissinger became even more important to Ford than he had been to Nixon. The two men pursued the foreign policies that Nixon and Kissinger had developed.

Encouraged by Sadat, the Secretary continued his efforts to mediate the Arab-Israeli conflict, engaging in "shuttle diplomacy" and seeking a final settlement, but the problem proved to be too tough. Egypt and Israel remained far apart on the future of the territories that Israel now controlled as a result of recent wars, on the establishment of a state controlled by the Palestinian Arabs, and even on the existence of Israel. The two sides were not moved closer by Kissinger's hints, and clear suggestions by other Americans, that following Israel's withdrawal from the captured territories, someone, perhaps the United States, perhaps a group of nations, would guarantee Israel's security. The Israelis seemed convinced that only their own power could guarantee their security, while the Egyptians were determined to regain control of one element of that power—the territory captured from Egypt. While not disinterested in Israel's survival, Kissinger seemed more concerned with limiting the Russian role in the Middle East, developing better relations with the oil-producing Arabs and Egypt, and avoiding another war that could create an oil crisis for the United States through a second oil embargo.

Kissinger also contributed to the development of a European Security Treaty in 1975, called the Helsinki Treaty. It reaffirmed the boundaries established after World War II in Eastern Europe but gained no concessions beyond promises to respect "human rights." Kissinger's critics felt that in Europe the Secretary was not worried about Russian power, ambitions, or the rights of people in Russian-dominated areas, including Russia itself where dissidents were being repressed by the government. The critics were incensed when Ford, eager to avoid displeasing Russian leaders, refused to meet with Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, an exiled critic of Russian oppression, Marxism, and detente. To many of his critics, Kissinger seemed interested only in power and tactics, and detente had become appeasement, a policy that had failed in the 1930s. He insisted, however, that American policies were in accord with realities and were a vast improvement over the cold war.



Kissinger, however, was not fully satisfied with Russian behavior. He made no progress in arms negotiations, and he admitted that Russia was still an expansionist nation. She had, he announced, achieved "true super power status." He was concerned that French and Italian Communists would gain places in their governments, thereby threatening NATO and American influence in Europe. He also worried about Russian arms and advisers and Cuban mercenaries in Angola, an African country that had recently gained independence from Portugal. He felt compelled to warn that "if the Soviet Union continued action such as Angola, we will without any question resist. . . . Unless the Soviet Union shows restraint in its foreign policy actions, the situation in our relationship is bound to become more tense, and there is no question that the United States will not accept Soviet military expansion of any kind." But when the administration tried to send military aid to the anti-Communist forces in Angola, the Senate cut off funds. Ford promptly proclaimed, without effect, that the power and prestige of the United States required that it contain Russian ambitions in Africa, and Kissinger failed to persuade the Russians to be more cautious.

Kissinger did achieve one apparent success in Africa. He worked out an agreement promising black rule for Rhodesia, a south African country in which most people were black, but whites monopolized political power. The agreement, however, did not seem firm.

In another part of the world, Kissinger failed to improve Chinese-American relations, despite his own efforts and the Chinese fear of Russia and desire for the United States to check the spread of the most powerful Communist nation. Russia had been strengthened in Southeast Asia by the triumph of its ally in Vietnam and was expanding the operations of its growing navy in the Indian Ocean. To Chinese leaders, American officials did not seem sufficiently worried about Russian power and ambitions. Moreover, the Chinese believed the United States was not sufficiently forceful in its dealings with the Soviet Union, and they were alarmed when Ford sided with Kissinger in his conflict over military policy with Schlesinger, dismissing the latter as Secretary of Defense. Yet, while fear of Russia pushed China toward the United States, other issues, especially American ties to Taiwan, maintained the gap between the two countries.

The administration frequently complained about the American

"failure of will" but could not rally interest. Kissinger tried to persuade Americans that their difficulties abroad were largely of their own making, but his critics denounced this theory as an argument for the dictatorship of the executive in foreign policy. These critics insisted that the loss of public faith in the major American institutions resulted quite logically from the behavior of the leaders in those institutions, and they could not solve their problems by rhetorical appeals for support.

Ford's domestic policies enjoyed no more success than did his foreign policies. As a congressman, he had established himself as a conservative on domestic issues. Now, as President, his attention focused on three difficult and conflicting problems: mounting unemployment as the economy slipped into another recession, soaring inflation, and a shortage of energy. To solve the problem of inflation, he advocated conservative fiscal and monetary policies, and in order to conserve energy and encourage exploration for oil, he supported a proposal applauded by the oil companies. He believed that higher energy prices would encourage both conservation and exploration and would reduce the nation's dependence on foreign oil. Liberal Democrats in Congress, however, believed that unemployment was the major problem, and that government spending was the solution. They opposed high gas prices, arguing, for example, that in most communities, workers had no alternative to automobiles as a means of transportation. Using the veto power frequently, Ford defeated many of the spending proposals, but the federal deficit still mounted. Because of the 1975 recession Ford felt compelled to accept both an increase in overall spending and a tax cut. Furthermore, he could not defeat the demand for low prices for domestic crude oil. By 1976, the economy had begun to recover slowly, and inflation had moderated, dropping to 5 percent, but unemployment, which had moved above 9 percent in 1975, did not fall much below 8 percent the following year, and the nation's dependence on foreign oil continued to grow.

Kissinger sought an international solution to the energy problems but was unsuccessful. While military force was a means favored by a few advocates of smashing OPEC, he did not believe that the situation at present justified that. Recognizing that increases in oil prices were but one of the causes of the nation's economic difficulties, he argued that the United States should not use military force just to lower oil prices but might

use it "where there's some actual strangulation of the industrialized world." In addition, one of his aides warned, in 1975, that "if Western dependence on imported oil is not ended in five years, the choice will be between political surrender or military force." The secretary did not pick up on a suggestion that food, which the United States produced in abundance, should be used as a weapon to force the cartel to change its behavior. Instead, his approach to energy problems centered around an effort to promote cooperation among the major oil consumers—the United States, Western Europe, and Japan—so that they could engage in tough and effective collective bargaining with the producers. His critics, including international bankers like David Rockefeller and George Ball and a Columbia University political scientist, Zbigniew Brzezinski, feared that he would damage American interests. They were eager to maintain American access to the raw materials and markets of the Third World and to influence the use of the new money of the OPEC countries. Thus, they called for more sympathy for the producers and suggested that greater efforts be made to cooperate with OPEC. Since Kissinger could not unite the consumers, he felt compelled to make concessions to his critics, who had mounted a campaign to drive him from office. He could not, however, reach agreement with the producers even about the subjects to be negotiated. Instead, the oil-rich Arabs began to cultivate the friendship of other Third World producers of raw materials and to join with them in the call for a new world order.

The behavior of the General Assembly of the United Nations dramatized American ineffectiveness. As a consequence of the rapid proliferation of nations since the 1940s, the new majority in the UN was composed of Third World countries. Eager to free themselves of all remnants of colonialism and convinced that Western exploitation was the source of their poverty and suffering, they were especially critical of the United States. They advocated a new international economic order to replace the one developed under American leadership since World War II. This alarmed Kissinger and caused him to insist that the United States must have access to the economies of the underdeveloped countries, and on terms that were attractive to Americans. In 1975, the administration called upon a flamboyant intellectual and frequent officeholder, Daniel Patrick Moynihan, to represent the United States in the UN. An advocate of a tough

approach, he criticized Third World countries in colorful and emotional speeches; he called them despotic, violators of human rights, and badly managed and praised the United States. His critics regarded him as undiplomatic, stubborn, and ineffective, even counterproductive. And, in his brief term as ambassador, he failed to restore American strength in the UN. He did not, for example, prevent the assembly from passing an Arab-sponsored, Russian-encouraged resolution against Israel, condemning Zionism as "racism," nor did he persuade the group to pass a resolution calling for amnesty for political prisoners everywhere.

Despite his ineffectiveness, many people liked Gerald Ford. He did not have Nixon's sense of insecurity and distrust of people; he pulled back from his predecessor's grandiose conception of the presidency; and he seemed to be modest, open, candid, honest, and hard working. Thus, he was not a genius or a man of vision but a good American rather like one of his heroes, Harry Truman. The Michigan Republican had a calming effect after the trauma of Watergate and Nixon's forced resignation.

Nevertheless, Ford had difficulty obtaining his party's nomination in 1976. He was strongly challenged by the ultraconservative Ronald Reagan, who campaigned against detente and for retention of American control of the Panama Canal. Ford won by only a narrow margin. He had to compromise with Reagan's faction on the platform and selected one of the faction's representatives, Senator Robert Dole of Kansas, for the vice-presidency.

In midsummer 1976, Ford seemed likely to lose the election by a wide margin, but like his hero, Truman, he gained ground rapidly. He took advantage of his position as President, spending much of the campaign period in the White House "being President." He attacked his foe as inexperienced, inconsistent, unclear, and misguided and the Democratic Congress as a big spender and the major source of inflation. He pointed with pride to his record, arguing that no Americans were fighting a war, employment was increasing, and inflation was declining. Several blunders, including a statement about freedom in Eastern Europe, and Reagan's less than full support, hampered his progress.

In the end, Ford lost, although the election was close. The winner, James Carter, was a small town Southerner, a devout Baptist, a former naval officer, a former governor of Georgia, a farmer, and a businessman. Carter had not been a man of national prominence and power, and he surprised the nation by

gaining the nomination with ease at the Democratic National Convention after strenuous and successful participation in the primaries throughout the nation. He campaigned on a theme that stressed Washington's defects and his personal honesty, not specific issues and not a clearly defined ideology. Senator Kennedy had dropped out once again, claiming that his family responsibilities were demanding, but he was also influenced, it seems, by Chappaquiddick, which symbolized for many people the moral defects in the man, however good he might be as a senator. Wallace had been defeated in the Southern primaries, which suggested that Carter could solve what had become a major problem for his party, the breakup of the solid South. Other candidates had crowded the field, including Henry Jackson, Birch Bayh, Fred Harris, Morris Udall, and Jerry Brown, all to be defeated by the Georgian.

Against Ford, Carter did not function as effectively. He stressed government reorganization, the reduction of unemployment, the continuation and expansion of government services, tax reform, fiscal responsibility, his own virtues and freedom from the sins of the past, and Ford's shortcomings as a leader. He also joined Ford in refusing to debate the meaning of the American experience in Vietnam. Above all, he promised moral regeneration. He benefited from the strengths of his own party and from the weaknesses of the economy, but he was hurt by doubts about him as a Southerner and a "born again" Baptist, especially among liberals, Catholics, and Jews, and by his own blunders, especially an unfortunate interview with *Playboy*.

Thus, Carter only squeaked through to victory. On election day, the liberals preferred him to Ford; his fellow Southerners gave him more than half of their votes, sharply reversing the Southern trend away from Democratic presidential candidates. Catholics and the organized workers gave him more support than they had given McGovern; most Jews stayed with the Democratic party, and more than 90 percent of the black voters supported Carter, off-setting the white majority for Ford. Carter carried nearly every Southern state and nearly split the North and the West, pulling back many Democrats who had deserted McGovern but not demonstrating the strength that pre-McGovern Democrats had shown. The Democrats also retained control of Congress by wide margins.

Obviously, Ford had not fully reestablished the nation's

confidence in its leaders. He had strengthened the presidency somewhat, doing so chiefly through his personal qualities, not because he pursued policies that had broad appeal, or because he was an especially effective occupant of the White House. But he could not sufficiently recover from the low point created by Nixon to win the election. In addition, he had lost to an "outsider," a person free of the taint of power in Washington. Furthermore, he was the first President since Herbert Hoover to fail to win a presidential election. Nevertheless, his failure was not solely or perhaps even chiefly a result of his own defects. Forced to grapple with a large number of tough problems, he suffered from Nixon's legacy, Democratic control of Congress, widespread distrust of the presidency, and lack of confidence in America's role in the world.

## Chapter 18

### Carter and Crisis

The new President was also a new person on the Washington scene, yet he had no more success than his predecessor, a Washington veteran, in solving the leadership crisis. His critics, however, paid too much attention to Carter's inability to handle the problems of the country and not nearly enough attention to the multitude and toughness of the problems that he faced, or to the other difficulties of his situation. The crisis, in other words, was much more severe than many suggested, and it was not going to disappear quickly.

At the outset of his administration, Carter's position was not substantially stronger than Ford's had been. Although he did not have to contend with a Congress controlled by the opposition party, he had won by only a narrow margin, 51 percent to 48, suggesting that his was more a party victory than a personal one. Turnout had been rather low, only 53 percent of the eligible voters went to the polls. He needed to build strength for himself.

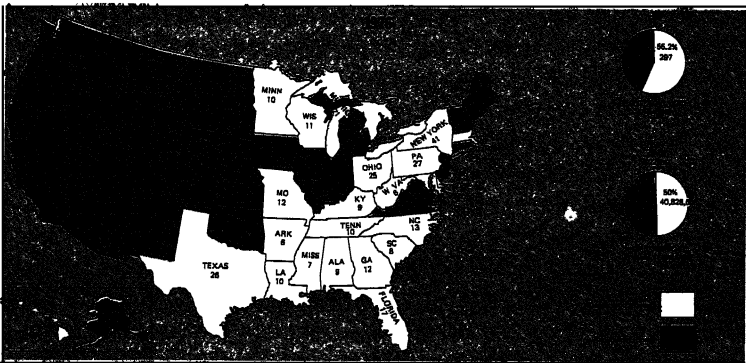
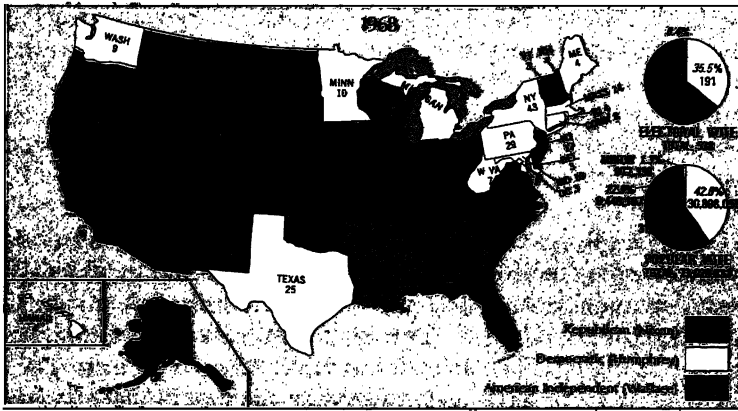
Carter's sense of his weaknesses affected his appointments. Although he had campaigned as an "outsider"—as a critic of the past—he now turned frequently to people with experience, including experience in the development of American foreign and military policies: Cyrus Vance became Secretary of State; Harold Brown became Secretary of Defense; James Schlesinger was the top man on energy, and Joseph Califano was the new head of Health, Education and Welfare. He also courted business

executives; he appointed W. Michael Blumenthal as Secretary of the Treasury, Juanita Kreps as Secretary of Commerce, and Bert Lance as head of the Office of Management and Budget. Corporate law, as usual, was also well represented, this time by Vance, Califano, Patricia Harris, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, and Attorney General Griffin Bell; academia was represented by Brown, Harris, Kreps, Secretary of Labor Ray Marshall, and Zbigniew Brzezinski, the National Security Adviser. Secretary of Transportation Brock Adams and Secretary of Agriculture Bob Berglund were former congressmen; Secretary of Interior Cecil Andrus was a former governor of Idaho. The most outspoken of the new ruling group, at least on the top level, was Andrew Young, a former civil rights activist who was appointed ambassador to the United Nations. The many roles played by a former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, Robert Strauss, symbolized the importance of established people in the administration. Obviously, Carter's hopes of building support with the establishment outweighed any desire to enlarge his image as an outsider. He did neglect organized labor, declining to appoint John Dunlop, a man who was close to the labor movement, as Secretary of Labor. Apparently, he took labor's backing for granted and refused to choose a person who could gain the support of a constituency when necessary.

Outsiders did hold important positions in the new administration. In particular, the White House staff was dominated by Georgians, such as Hamilton Jordan and Jody Powell who had worked with Carter at home but had never served in Washington. In addition, many people who were new to power in Washington—and also not closely tied to Carter—served below the top levels in many departments and agencies. These people had come into politics and government through participation in the movements for peace, civil rights, women, consumers, and the environment. They were eager to promote change and were under pressure to do so from former associates who remained outside government.

At the beginning of his term, Carter devoted much of his energy to building popular support. He made great efforts to demonstrate that he was a "people's President," not an imperial type. As one commentator observed, in a variety of ways, he sought to dramatize "the qualities of morality, frugality,





*The Rise and Fall of Republican Presidents: The Presidential Elections of 1968, 1972, and 1976*

simplicity, candor and compassion for which the voters had been searching." He hoped to restore confidence in government as well as to establish confidence in himself; he cultivated "the people" rather than the "interests," suggesting in populist fashion that the former were good, the latter bad. And he relied heavily on both television and direct contacts to accomplish these objectives.

As these efforts moved forward, Carter presented and pressed his solutions to the nation's problems. Seeking to distinguish himself from Nixon, Ford, and Kissinger, although also taking advantage of the Helsinki Treaty, he embarked on a campaign for human rights. But, like so much else that had been tried in Washington since 1972, this campaign accomplished very little. He regarded it as the centerpiece—the "fundamental tenet"—of his foreign policy. Seeking to overcome negative views of American foreign policy, he, like Moynihan earlier and the 1976 Democratic platform that Moynihan had helped to write, criticized many countries, not just Russia, for violating human rights. Many people—inside as well as outside the United States, State Department officials as well as journalists, allies as well as Russians—charged that the campaign was meddling, harmful to international relations, destructive of detente, and a return to the cold war. The administration often retreated under pressure.

Carter also encountered great difficulties on an issue for which the groundwork had been laid by the Johnson, Nixon, and Ford administrations. Foes of two treaties dealing with the Panama Canal forced him to battle for months and nearly defeated him. The key feature of the treaties would give Panama control of the canal by the year 2000. Conservatives, including Reagan, Strom Thurmond, Jesse Helms, and the American Conservative Union (but not the large corporations interested in Latin America), actively campaigned against the treaty, charging that the documents would surrender American property that was vital to national security. To the conservatives, the treaties seemed to be a symbol of American decline. To the defenders, who denied that the United States owned or had sovereignty over the canal, the treaties seemed the proper way for a great nation to behave. Moreover, they insisted, the terms would permit the United States to prevent a hostile power from gaining control of the canal and would enable the United States to use it when necessary. Furthermore, they maintained, the canal was losing its

strategic and economic importance. The massive debate, with Carter as an active participant, raged for nearly eight months and ended in victories for the President in March and April 1978. But, despite help from Ford and Kissinger, the treaties only won by the narrowest of margins.

Picking up where Kissinger left off, Carter worked for a new Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty with the Russians but did not enjoy even a narrow victory. Well-informed about nuclear weapons, due to his naval service, he was fearful of them and of both their spread to other nations and the Russian-American arms race. He pressed the Russians to agree to cuts in the nuclear arsenals, but Russian leaders rejected his first proposal. Carter pressed forward, aided by Vance and their special arms negotiator, Paul Warnke. Negotiations did not break down, and signs of progress were reported from time to time. Yet, foes of a new treaty, like Senator Jackson, fearful that it would weaken American security, posed the possibility that no treaty acceptable to the Russians would be ratified by the Senate.

Worried about the possibilities of a Russian-American confrontation and a new oil embargo, Carter continued Kissinger's pursuit of a "comprehensive" settlement in the Middle East, but he, too, found the problems to be tough. Apparently accepting suggestions that Israel's behavior was the key to the difficulties, he pressed Israel to accept participation in negotiations that included the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), to agree to withdraw to "defensible borders" close to those it had had before the 1967 war, and to accept a "homeland" for the Palestinian Arabs in exchange for Arab recognition of Israel's right to exist and conduct normal relations. Carter, Vance, and others met frequently with Middle Eastern leaders, especially Sadat and the new Israeli Prime Minister, Menahem Begin. Persuaded that the Arab-Israeli conflict was the most burning issue on the international scene, Carter also attempted to draw Russia into the negotiating process.

Although Arab leaders welcomed Carter's efforts, they alarmed Israelis and many friends of Israel in the United States. The Arabs hoped that American pressures would succeed, but Begin was a Polish Jew haunted by memories of the Holocaust, influenced by visions of the boundaries of biblical times, and the leader of a hard-line party. Thus, he tried to persuade the American leaders that few concessions could be made. Friends of Israel in

the United States, and they were numerous and often influential, were convinced of the strategic importance of Israel, as well as its moral significance, believed that Carter did not support it as firmly as his predecessors had, reminded him that the PLO was committed to the destruction of the country, expressed alarm about the proposals on boundaries, and pointed to the dangers involved in efforts to draw Russia into the negotiating process. Some charged that oil explained the direction that American policies were taking. These pressures forced Carter to insist that he supported Israel, would not harm it, and would not impose a settlement, but he regarded Begin as undesirably inflexible.

While a surprise move by Sadat changed the situation, it still failed to produce a solution. In November 1977, Sadat visited Israel to initiate face-to-face negotiations between the Egyptians and the Israelis. The move was influenced by his country's severe economic problems, the need for peace, and concern about some features of the American peace efforts, including the encouragement of Russian participation. He may have hoped to obtain concessions or to embarrass Israel and establish better relations with the United States. Sadat's act divided the Arabs, since many Arabs refused to talk with a nation whose right to exist they denied, and produced fresh conflict between Egypt and Russia. But, coupled with Begin's refusal to make major concessions and an Israeli raid into Lebanon, the peace initiative gained new admirers for Sadat in the United States and somewhat greater sympathy for the Arab cause. Carter did what he could to assist the Egyptian president, but after a promising beginning, negotiations ground to a halt as the two sides discovered how far apart they were on key issues. Carter tried to get the talks going again and to persuade Begin to be more flexible. Finally, his persistence paid off as the Egyptians and the Israelis agreed upon a peace treaty, but it and Sadat were denounced by many Arabs, and big issues continued to divide the Middle East and generate violence there.

In hopes of strengthening Arab moderates and American influence, the administration worked out an arms deal. It would send the nation's best fighter plane, the F-15, not only to Israel, as had been expected, but also to Saudi Arabia, an oil-rich country controlled by antiradical and anti-Russian leadership; other planes would be sent to Egypt. Israel and many of its

American friends opposed the deal, doubting that the Saudis could be counted on to restrain Israel's enemies and avoid hostile acts used against Israel. To critics, the deal clearly indicated that Carter and his top adviser on foreign affairs, Brzezinski, were insensitive to Israel's security needs, that they were tilting away from Israel and toward Saudi Arabia. The debate was hot, but the President won because Congress refused to veto the deal.

Africa also continued to be a trouble spot in which the Carter administration, like the Ford administration before it, tried without great success to exert influence. The administration maintained the pressure for black rule in the southern part of the continent. Whites in South Africa were adamantly opposed to change, while those in Rhodesia were more flexible. Washington, fearing that Cuban troops and Russian supplies would become involved in fighting there, struggled to find a plan that would result in orderly and peaceful transition to black rule. Cuban troops and Russian money, supplies, and advisers were involved in fighting in Ethiopia, enabling the Ethiopians to drive the Somalians out of the contested territory and then to move against Eritrea. The Russians and Cubans were active in other parts of Africa as well, including areas bordering Rhodesia. Some Africans, moderate Arabs, the French, and other Western Europeans urged the United States to step up its activities and make use of military aid and economic assistance and pressure. Brzezinski agreed. In May 1978, the administration made its biggest military move, airlifting supplies to Belgian and French forces in Zaire, which had been invaded, through Angola, by Russian-equipped and Cuban-trained Katangans. Most of the time, however, Washington relied on verbal pressure, and the Russians and Cubans remained on the Dark Continent.

The administration achieved more success in its efforts to improve relations with China but paid a price in doing so. Both Vance and Brzezinski visited China eager to break the diplomatic stalemate that had prevailed since 1972. The Chinese, viewing Russia as extremely aggressive, continued to worry about what appeared to be an American retreat from containment, encouraging Brzezinski to assure the Chinese that the United States would remain strong in Asia and would check the Russians. Taiwan remained the greatest stumbling block. Seeking a formula that would enable it to abandon the regime in

Taiwan and recognize Peking without suffering severe political damage at home and abroad, the administration experienced frequent frustrations. Finally, in 1979, Washington reestablished normal diplomatic relations with the mainland but broke its official ties with Taiwan to reach this objective.

Thus, the administration inherited a wide variety of tough problems in international affairs and, in dealing with them, was hampered by confusion and uncertainty in Congress and the nation concerning the role that the nation should play in the world. A similar state of mind prevailed in the closely related area of military policy, and it directly affected the administration. At the beginning of his administration, Carter pardoned draft evaders and announced that American troops would soon be withdrawn from South Korea. He also resisted pressure for construction of the B-1 bomber, and he decided to cut back on the navy's ship-building program. Champions of military power protested against his plans, charging that he was not sufficiently sensitive to the threats from Russia and Communism.

In recent years, the Russians had strengthened their forces and influence, expanding the army, developing a large navy, and increasing their arms sales and technicians in the Third World. As Carter's concern about these developments mounted, he alarmed critics of military spending by calling for a significant increase in the military budget for fiscal 1979, a substantial strengthening of NATO forces, and the development and deployment of a new weapon, the neutron bomb. Then, he dismayed advocates of greater military strength by first deciding that the bomb would not be built and then announcing that production would be postponed while the nation waited to see how Russia behaved.

At the same time that Carter faced major international problems, he also had to grapple with domestic problems, passed on to him by Ford—most notably, unemployment, inflation and the energy crisis. At first, slow economic growth and high unemployment seemed especially pressing, for 7.3 percent of the work force did not have jobs when he took office and the percentage jumped to 7.5 as a result of a severe winter that overtaxed the supplies of natural gas and oil. To stimulate the economy, Carter proposed a \$23 to \$30 billion program for the next eighteen months. Although the program included increased spending,

it emphasized tax cuts, in the hope that such a package would encourage businessmen to increase their capital investments. Congress passed much of his economic stimulus package.

As unemployment began to decline in the spring, falling below 7 percent, Carter dropped a major feature of his economic program, the tax rebate, shifted his attention to inflation, and strengthened his resistance to costly federal job programs. Rejecting price and wage controls, he made several anti-inflation proposals and promised to balance the budget by the end of his term. By the end of the year, unemployment fell to 6.4 percent and below 6 percent in 1978. During most of 1977, inflation was at 7 percent; then it began to escalate. Before inflation was considered serious, however, Carter's concern about unemployment, which was especially high among blacks, mounted once again, causing him to return to plans for a tax cut. But with inflation soaring back toward the 1974 level, he defined it as the nation's number one problem. In addition to scaling down his tax-cut proposal, he tried to get the economy under control by promising a balanced budget, sometime soon, and by using verbal pressure—"jawboning"—to force corporations and unions to exercise restraint in price increases and wage demands. Although he relied heavily on the skills of Robert Strauss in the anti-inflation campaign, success eluded him.

This somewhat confusing course, influenced by difficulties in deciding whether unemployment or inflation was the greater problem, failed to satisfy the many groups in American life. Businessmen, despite Carter's courting of them, had little confidence in the administration, and, those doubts as well as more fundamental problems in the economic system, were reflected in a tumbling stock market, with the Dow-Jones industrial average, which had been at 1,000 when Carter took over, falling close to 750 by April 1978, although it later regained some of the lost ground. Corporate leaders did not believe that they had as much responsibility for inflation as the jawboning implied, and conservatives, in and out of corporate ranks, insisted that government spending and deficits were responsible for the decline. Labor unions insisted that big business caused inflation and that workers were its victims, not its cause. Carter failed to gain the full confidence of the labor movement, for although he supported a labor reform bill that would facilitate organizing efforts, he could not prevent a filibuster in the Senate from

blocking its passage. Labor leaders joined liberals and black leaders in complaints that the administration was not doing enough to reduce unemployment or solve the problems of the poor; and they demanded more government spending. To many of them, he seemed to be little more than a Southern Ford. Farmers, dissatisfied with the relations between the prices of the things they sold and the prices of things they bought, also protested against administration farm policies and other features of their situation. And many congressmen rose up in anger when Carter, in an effort to balance the budget, opposed water projects they favored.

An unfavorable balance of trade also continued to plague Washington. Linked closely with the problems of unemployment and inflation, and with the energy crisis, it accompanied an alarming decline of the dollar in the foreign markets and the growth of protectionism in the United States. Protectionist sentiment focused against Japan, one of the nation's closest allies. For many years now, Japan had been exporting large numbers of automobiles, television sets, and other products to the United States; it sold much more to the United States than it purchased. The problem prompted the administration to negotiate with the Japanese in order to encourage them to sell less to Americans and to buy more from the United States, but Strauss, who was doing the negotiating, accomplished little.

Still grappling with economic problems, the administration developed an energy program and then attempted to build support for it. Late in April 1977, Carter introduced his proposals to combat the energy crisis. They envisioned a smooth transition to an era of scarce and high-priced oil; they relied heavily on taxing power to encourage people to shift from large automobiles to small ones, to cut back on the miles they drove, to insulate their homes and buildings, and to shift from natural gas and oil to coal, nuclear power, and solar energy. Warning of a bleak future, praising conservation, appealing to patriotism, and criticizing the "special interests," the President, others in the administration, and the Democratic National Committee waged a massive campaign to build support for the program.

At first, it seemed that Carter might succeed. Congress endorsed the proposal for a Department of Energy and his selection of James Schlesinger to head it. The House, in less than four months (with the Speaker, "Tip" O'Neill of Massachusetts,



cooperating with the administration and providing effective leadership), passed energy legislation that conformed satisfactorily with the administration's proposals. It seemed that Carter had learned how to work with Congress and had developed good relations with congressional leaders.

Carter's energy package, however, bogged down in the Senate, running into the filibuster, that special senatorial device for slowing things down. A temporary surplus of oil contributed to the resistance, augmenting already strong doubts that an energy crisis actually existed. Dislike for the tax features and demands for the deregulation of newly discovered natural gas also were factors. Republicans and Southern Democrats, with Senator Russell Long of Louisiana, the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, playing an especially large role, combined to revise the package, incorporating the ideas of producers; liberal Democrats and administration representatives battled against them. But lacking support from consumer groups and environmentalists, they lost on key issues, causing Carter to denounce the giant oil companies. When Senate and House conferees engaged in lengthy negotiations to iron out their differences, the administration embarked upon a new, large-scale campaign on behalf of its proposals, with Carter postponing a foreign trip so as to concentrate on building support. But dominated by other concerns, the public was not moved by the campaign, and the administration felt compelled to make concessions.

Despite Carter's appeal as a populist, his proposals did not have enough support from "the people" to overcome opposition from "the interests." In fact, most people opposed his energy package. By emphasizing conservation rather than the development of new resources, the program was calling upon Americans to change their life styles, and most of them did not want to do so. Furthermore, most people did not believe the energy problem was as serious as the President suggested. With confidence in Carter declining, his ability to shape public opinion on this issue suffered, and he could not rally public support with his attacks upon the big oil companies or his battle against the deregulation of natural gas. In addition, the program's heavy reliance on taxes ran head on into the growing "tax revolt." Thus, the people did not rise up and help Carter by putting pressure on Congress.

As Carter struggled with the politics of energy, a coal strike erupted. Lasting throughout the winter of 1977-1978, it became

the longest in the nation's history, and it only added to the President's difficulties. Coal had taken on renewed importance as a consequence of the nation's energy problems, and it figured prominently in Carter's solutions. As the strike continued, he resisted pressure to invoke the Taft-Hartley Act's injunction. He hoped that the normal negotiating process would produce a satisfactory solution, yet he and others in the administration applied whatever pressure seemed appropriate to them. The miners rebuffed the President, turning down a contract that the administration promoted and endorsed, thereby persuading Carter to resort to the injunction, a weapon that did not return many miners to work. Before it ended, the strike forced many industries and schools to curtail their operations or to close down completely. The episode increased awareness of the importance of coal and added to the criticism of Carter as a weak President.

Long before the spring of 1978, confidence in Carter had gone into decline. At first, his efforts to build popular support appeared successful. By July 1977, more than 60 percent of the people approved of his performance. By fall, however, less than 50 percent did so, and by May 1978, the figure was well below 40 percent.

The Lance affair of late summer was the turning point for Carter. Bert Lance, the director of the Office of Management and Budget, was a Georgian and a close friend and adviser of Carter. During August and September, journalists and government officials subjected his pregovernment career as a banker to careful scrutiny. They discovered that it was filled with questionable practices, including what amounted to large, interest-free and inadequately secured loans, illegal campaign contributions, and the improper use of bank-owned airplanes—all influenced by the man's expansive ambitions. Journalists and politicians called for his resignation, as did most people who wrote to the White House or talked to pollsters. Carter expressed great admiration, affection, and confidence in his friend. But the situation became intolerable when a Senate hearing supported the work of several government investigators, damaging Lance still more. Before the end of September, he resigned. The episode had challenged Carter's claim that he demanded a higher code of ethics than had his predecessors.

The collapse of popular confidence in Carter stimulated predictions that he would serve for only one term. His troubles per-

suaded the Republicans that they had great opportunities to make a comeback, but none of his Republican foes appeared to be strong contenders. The number of people who identified with the GOP was smaller, relative to the size of the population, than it had been for many years. The number of Republican office-holders was at a dismally low point. Furthermore, the party was divided between fragmented moderates, who hoped to broaden the party's appeal, and conservatives, topped by the aging Ronald Reagan, who hoped to commit it to their doctrines. Republican difficulties persuaded some prophets that Carter would be displaced in his own party, perhaps by Governor Brown or Senator Kennedy.

To most commentators, Carter seemed responsible for his own failures. Although he was intelligent, worked hard, and was obviously honest, sincere, and emotionally secure, he seemed to suffer from inexperience in dealing in Washington and from heavy reliance on inexperienced advisers, most of them from Georgia. He tried to do too much himself and did not have a chief of staff coordinating work in the White House and its relations with others. He appeared to be indecisive, made too many proposals at a time, and did not define his priorities clearly. He did not respect the realities of the Washington scene; nor did he work closely and effectively with organized groups, congressmen, and his party. He was weak in his dealings with people, retreated too readily under pressure, and needed to be much more forceful.

Many of these criticisms were justified, and Carter, recognizing these facts, made some changes in 1978. He added some experienced people to the White House staff and conferred more authority on Jordan for the management of it. He made greater efforts to cultivate congressmen and other powerful people in the nation's capital and, at the same time, he went out among the people, beyond Washington. He defined his priorities and tried to behave more forcefully in his dealings with members of his administration, congressmen, and others.

Such remedies, however, seemed unlikely to bring the leadership crisis to an end, for Carter's failures owed more to the toughness of the situation than to his personal characteristics. The situation contained a multitude of complex problems that had been developing for several years—in fact, in some cases, for many years. Beyond that, Carter had to contend with wide-

spread and deep skepticism about government and the presidency, which had been generated by his predecessors.

Carter may have been attempting the impossible. He was trying to provide leadership, but he occupied an office and presided over a system that had been discredited for millions of people by past errors. To the left it seemed, as expressed by Sheldon S. Wolin, that "the widespread loss of confidence in our political institutions and leaders, the lack of respect for authority, the alienation from the official values of the society, even the revulsion against politics" were "sensible responses to the debacle accomplished by those in authority." Less radical people were equally convinced.

Many Americans believed that government had shown itself to be immoral, inefficient, and ineffective. It seemed to be doing an enormous amount but accomplishing very little; it seemed too big to work. To many people, the tax system was unfair, in that it favored the wealthy. To many others, it merely seemed too burdensome for the benefits that government conferred. In California, in 1978, this antitax feeling reached a new high with the passage of Proposition 13, which slashed property taxes by more than 50



*The Carters in the White House (Dennis Brack/Black Star)*

percent and seriously threatened funds for schools and other services. Such moves reflected deep unhappiness with what government was doing and with government officials, as well as with the size of tax bills.

Antigovernment attitudes had long been a staple of American conservative thought, but such attitudes were now expressed by some intellectuals who once had been liberals and had had confidence in government. Conservatives like William Buckley had been joined by liberal intellectuals like Daniel Patrick Moynihan and Nathan Glazer, who had grown disillusioned after the confident days of the 1960s.

The New Left, of course, had regarded liberal government as a failure, and, if no longer involved in large-scale demonstrations, this movement still exerted an influence on American intellectual life, encouraging, what some commentators called, the "adversary culture."

People on the right as well as the left, then, expressed the spirit of discontent. As one of Nixon's defenders put it: *It Didn't Start with Watergate*. Intellectuals on the right and the left were united in their belief that American reality was sordid. American leaders did not deserve confidence. It would be only a matter of time, it seemed, before the nation discovered that Carter was as corrupt as the men who had gone before him. The lack of confidence in government and leaders was not confined to intellectuals and the people influenced by them. White-collar workers, blue-collar workers, and middle-class Americans of various occupations also felt they had become strangers in a nation controlled by a liberal establishment hostile toward traditional values. Country music, popular throughout the nation with working class, rural, and small-town people, sang of the superiority of the rural South, a surviving symbol of a vanished America, and expressed profound discontent with the now dominant way of life. Although seemingly filled with love of country, the music contained resentment of and hostility toward the powerful people in the big cities who seemed responsible for the rise of the new way of life. Carter, as a small-town Southerner, had some appeal for country music fans, but he quickly lost much of it when he became and behaved like a man of power.

Evangelical Christianity, a reviving and fast-growing movement of 30 to 40 million people, also reflected deep discontent

with what America, and especially American leaders, had become. "Americans are undergoing a crisis of meaning and self-confidence," one observer wrote, "and large numbers of them are turning or returning to religion, usually of the pietistic and evangelical kind." The Southern Baptist contingent, especially, had high hopes for Carter's presidency, since they considered him one of them, but he could not satisfy their yearnings for the redemption of government through the election of honest, moral, and simple leaders. Although his Baptist faith continued to influence him and to offend some big-city Americans, he basically behaved like other politicians. Some evangelicals doubted his religious commitment from the outset, and many of those caught up in what has been called "a third Great Awakening" were disinterested in public life and contemporary issues.

Carter also had to contend with a skeptical, often hostile press, that had been deeply affected by Vietnam, Watergate, and other political experiences. Strengthened by the development of television and other new instruments, the media were animated by a new spirit. Once a tool that effective Presidents could manipulate, the press expressed a mistrust of the presidency and was much more likely to criticize a President than be used by him.

In addition, Carter had to deal with a more active and critical Congress. Embarrassed by charges of past subservience to the White House, Congress had become more assertive. Many new members, shaped by recent experiences, especially Vietnam and Watergate, no longer deferred to senior members, insisted upon a new code of ethics, and demanded that the President avoid the "excesses" of the past at home and abroad. Senior members, possessed of a strong sense of pride and independence, were quick to press views that diverged from those of the President, even when he was a member of their own party. And all congressmen were helped by a staff that was more professional and had been substantially enlarged in recent years.

Furthermore, the President had, to a significant degree, lost his strongest allies and defenders—the liberals. Since the days of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, they had advocated a strong White House, seeing it as the most effective promoter of broad and desirable national interests. But Vietnam, Watergate,

and other episodes had changed them; they, too, distrusted that office and offered new support for a Congress and press corps that checked rather than cooperated with the President. In fact, these new liberals were well-represented in the press, Congress, congressional staffs, the bureaucracy, and the "public interest" pressure groups.

Carter suffered from another problem. He could not rally the public by making promises similar to those made by leaders in the past. He could not readily promise victories abroad, continuous economic growth, and ever higher standards of living to a people who had suffered defeat in war and faced an energy crisis. The nation had grown accustomed to strong Presidents during its rise to the top of the international power structure. For a time, Nixon had provided a display of effectiveness in the new, more complex situation—a situation in which the United States remained the strongest nation, but power had become more widely distributed. After 1972, the difficulties of operating effectively in the international arena became increasingly obvious. The United States now bore the stigma of defeat; Russia, with its large and complex arsenal and allies in Southeast Asia, Latin America, and Africa, as well as Eastern Europe, had become much more than a regional power; and the Arabs and black Africans had demonstrated their ability to assert themselves. Facing an enormously difficult international situation, Carter could not inspire people and gain their support by making great promises about the consequences of American moves in the world.

In addition, there were related and troublesome energy questions, which suggested that the American people might be forced to change their way of life. Those problems prevented a highly sensitive person from promising endless growth, a "Great Society" or some other ambitious goal that could be reached if only his lead was followed.

Carter understood the difficulties of his situation and was, in some respects, a representative of them. Aware of the public's disenchantment with government, he had, in fact, run against Washington in 1976. Although he frequently turned to government, rather than the private sector, to deal with problems, most notably the energy problems, and thought more in terms of making big government more efficient through reorganization,

rather than in scaling it down, he often indicated that he did not expect as much from government as some of his predecessors had and many of his liberal contemporaries still did. Although an active President, he carefully stayed within lines that some of his predecessors had crossed. He worried about the dangers that world affairs contained, even though he remained active. And he was sensitive to the implications of the energy crisis, more so than most Americans.

Thus, Carter did not end the leadership crisis, and it is unlikely that he will do so. It is foolish to argue that his own defects explain this fundamental failure, and that all the nation needs is a more talented President. The problems of the nation are numerous and complex; and negative attitudes toward government and the presidency hamper efforts to deal with problems. Opportunities for dramatic rhetoric and effective moves capable of rallying support for the White House are rather slim. It appears that the nation will be forced to live with a crippled presidency for some time to come, and, since no other institution seems capable of providing direction, the prospects for America's future are not bright.



## ANOTHER NEW AMERICA?

A new America may be emerging out of the troubled times that the nation has been struggling with for more than a decade, and if it does, it will differ significantly from the America of the recent past. If, as seems likely, the structure of the economic system remains essentially what it has been since the age of Roosevelt, the performance of the system may be quite different. And the relations between the races and the sexes, and between the United States and the rest of the world, may be quite new. The United States may no longer be a global power.

An historian cannot write with confidence about such matters. The emergence of a new America is only a possibility, not a certainty. The forces of resistance as well as the forces of change show signs of strength. What is clear, however, is that great debates about the American future raged during the 1970s. Is a new America taking shape? Should it be permitted to do so? Questions such as these were raised repeatedly.

The new America could be a place of economic stagnation or even decline. Economic growth has been a major feature of American history since the beginning and is highly valued, never more so than in the years since the Great Depression. By the mid-seventies, however, many prophets suggested that economic growth would soon end or could do so. Obviously, the nation would be a different place if permanent stagnation or decline displaced growth.

Even before the end of the 1960s, some Americans had begun to question whether economic growth could continue. In fact, a consumer movement had taken shape to protest against the quality of goods and services produced by the American economic system and challenged the principle that all of the economy's output should be counted as growth. The leading figure in the movement, Ralph Nader, in a book called *Unsafe at Any Speed*, attacked one of the mainstays of the system, the automobile industry. He moved on to criticize other products and parts of government that served corporate rather than public interests. Basic to his consumerism was skepticism about the eagerness of business to serve consumers, and that skepticism extended to governments on all levels.

To compensate for the shortcomings of the system, Nader developed a substantial organization that investigated economic and political institutions, publicized the findings, and engaged in lobbying and litigation. These activities made Americans more aware that such problems existed and that, as consumers, they had many grievances and persuaded corporations and governments to adopt new programs. Not a pessimist, Nader assumed that a strong, well-informed consumer movement could force the economic system to turn out goods of high quality at low prices. Some of his critics believed that he reduced corporate effectiveness; others doubted that corporations could be forced to serve the public.

Closely related to the consumer movement, but more fundamental in its implications, was the environment crusade. It was spurred by rapid economic and population growth and the writings of Rachel Carson, Barry Commoner, Paul Ehrlich, and others. These crusaders called attention to the pollution of air and water by factories, electrical power plants, city sewage systems, and agricultural production with its heavy reliance on fertilizers and pesticides. They pointed to pollution by detergents, nonreturnable containers, paper, and the modern jet airplane, which poured smoke into the air and contributed significantly to the high noise level of modern life. The worst polluter, of course, was the automobile that Americans valued so highly.

Alarm about population growth was linked with concern about pollution. The world's population had increased from 1 billion in 1810 to 3 billion in 1960 and seemed to be heading toward 6 billion by 2000; this would mean that there would not

be enough resources—nor enough room—for all of the world's people. Especially alarming was the growth of a population that consumed at the American rate. While Americans represented only 6 percent of mankind, they were responsible for 40 percent of the world's consumption and 50 percent of its pollution. Soon, it seemed, the environment would not be able to satisfy the desires or serve the needs of the American people, for resources were limited and Americans were becoming too numerous and were too destructive. "Today we annually feed our livestock as much grain as all the people in China and India eat in a year," an advocate of a *Diet for a Small Planet* maintained. For Americans, meat eating, which had increased sharply since World War II, had become a symbol of affluence.

Critics of pollution and population mounted a challenge to the American commitment to growth. They criticized the "growth generation . . . the neo-Keynesian mentality that *still* expects to find salvation in the continued growth of population and production." They suggested that the concept of the gross national product concealed the fact that the system produced "bads" as well as "goods." Pessimists insisted that the growth philosophy must be discarded, for it conflicted with the world's supply of resources. According to one, "Keynesian economics has allowed us an affluent but shortened life span. We have now run our course." Some concerned citizens joined together to form Zero Population Growth Inc., a group that sought to stabilize the population in the United States and elsewhere by means of contraception, abortion, and sterilization.

In 1972, fears about the future were expressed dramatically in the Club of Rome's popular and widely debated report, called *The Limits of Growth*. The club, a group of businessmen and scientists, predicted that continued growth in production and population would lead to catastrophe in 100 years: mass starvation, resource exhaustion, the raising of pollution to lethal levels, a worldwide class war over diminishing resources. To avoid such a future, the club, and others, suggested that the rich nations should restrict growth and share their current wealth with the poor.

Two years later, Robert L. Heilbroner brought much of the pessimism together in his *Inquiry into the Human Prospect*. An optimistic champion of economic growth only a few years earlier, he now predicted that man's prospect was "painful, diffi-

cult, perhaps desperate. . . . The industrial growth process, so central to the economic and social life of capitalism and Western socialism alike, will be forced," he wrote, "to slow down . . . within a generation or two, and will probably have to give way to decline thereafter." Other consequences would follow: "the risk of 'wars of redistribution' or of 'preemptive seizure,' the rise of social tensions in the industrialized nations over the division of an ever more slow-growing or even diminishing product, and the prospect of a far more coercive exercise of national power as the means by which we attempt to bring these disruptive processes under control."

The environmentalists offered many moves to protect and improve the environment. They championed restrictions on strip mining and the burning of coal, attempted to block the use of nuclear power as a source of energy, and battled against the polluting effects of gasoline and for cuts in the use of electricity and synthetics. In response to such pressures, laws were passed, environmental protection agencies established, corporations proclaimed their commitment to the crusade, and adjustments were made: lead-free gasoline, returnable containers, wilderness areas, bans on detergents and DDT, the conversion of mined areas to recreation spots, pollution control devices for auto engines and smoke stacks, a slow down in the development of nuclear power plants. But these adjustments fell far short of what many of the environmentalists demanded. As Barry Commoner put it: "the solution of the environmental crisis is not to be found in new kinds of automobile mufflers or in legal constraints on waste emissions but in the radical reorganization of national economies and international commerce along lines that make ecological sense."

Not everyone in the early 1970s was persuaded by the critics of growth. Many people continued to adhere to the growth philosophy and battled against the environmentalists, arguing that their proposals would damage or destroy industries, produce unemployment, reduce food production, increase disease, block needed projects, and prevent lower income groups from achieving higher standards of living. "Our present behavior will very probably force our descendants to return to the industrial economy of the early 19th century," a champion of nuclear energy warned. "If we are lucky, our descendants will be no more than amused by the nuclear Luddites of our time." Many Americans, while

concerned about the environment, had confidence that technology would solve pollution, population, and resource problems, thereby guaranteeing that growth could continue. The solutions would be costly but less so than the problems, and the costs could be shared by governments and corporations. Some critics of the pessimists argued that the United States and some other parts of the world were far from overcrowded and pointed to the sharp drop in the birth rate in many places since the 1950s, suggesting that a "baby bust" had replaced the "baby boom." The critics also expressed great concern about the millions of people who were not affluent, charging that the environmentalists were white, middle and upper class, elitist, antidemocratic, unconcerned about the suffering of the poor, and eager to protect their own privileges. "To say that one is an 'environmentalist' or that one favors 'no growth,' " one critic charged, "is to say that one has achieved enough well-being from the present system and that one is now content to let it remain as is—or even regress a little—because one's material comfort under the present system has been more or less assured."

In the early 1970s, droughts and crop failures in several places seemed to strengthen the argument that the champions of continued growth ignored fundamentals: the pressure of population on limited resources. They increased the number of hungry and starving people in the Third World and stimulated talk about a "food crisis." Convinced that population would increase at a higher rate than food production, some pessimists proposed that the United States aid countries with the greatest chances of survival and abandon the others to famine. But those who were more sanguine insisted that the problems could be solved by aid programs, birth control, and changes in agricultural systems and practices, and in food distribution. This crisis, however, did not hit the United States, for its agriculture continued to produce abundantly. It took another type of crisis—the "energy crisis"—to widen and intensify American worry about the future.

Although concern about energy did not become widespread until the fall of 1973, the problem had been mounting for several years. Since 1950, oil consumption had nearly tripled in the United States and had grown even faster in Western Europe and Japan. Oil had displaced coal as the major source of energy, and it fueled the economic growth of these parts of the world. Even the term "energy crisis" emerged before the fall of 1973. It was

used by the oil industry in its campaign for an end to environmental restrictions and government control of gas prices; by consumer groups and other reformers, and by people who had begun to worry about Western dependence on Middle Eastern oil and the Arabs' use of the power that oil confers.

The Arabs, indeed, used their power with great impact. In October, 1973, they banned oil exports to the United States and several other countries, expressing resentment of aid for Israel. Next, the Arabs and other Third World nations, seeking to gain more benefits from their resources, used OPEC to quadruple oil prices. This action resulted in shortages of gasoline for several months, higher prices and recession in the United States, and even more severe problems in Japan, Western Europe, and many poor countries that were more dependent on oil from the Middle East. In the next three years, OPEC pushed oil prices even higher, enriching and strengthening the ruling classes in the oil-rich countries of the Middle East. Each time OPEC met, the oil-consuming nations watched with interest and waited fearfully for the cartel's decision on prices.

The severe winters of 1977 and 1978 and the coal strike in 1978 increased the concerns about energy. The harsh winters placed great demands on the natural gas industry, which supplied energy for nearly half of the homes and industries, and the industry did not meet all demands. The coal strike forced electrical utilities to cut services. Thus, many parts of the country suffered shortages that forced offices, factories, and schools to close for a period of time; it also increased unemployment. Such conditions, although temporary, compelled people to think about energy, and after the strike, utilities raised the rates for the energy they supplied.

The crisis escalated efforts to reduce American dependence on Middle Eastern oil and stimulated concern about American reliance on Third World countries for other raw materials. These concerns generated talk of a "materials crisis." Some observers feared that Third World countries would imitate OPEC behavior. Such alarmists called for programs, such as the mining of the ocean floors, to reduce American dependence on foreign raw materials. They also urged that stronger efforts be made to expand American influence in the Third World. Others doubted that the people who controlled other natural resources could imitate OPEC and suggested that the United States had its own resources, especially food, that the Third World needed.

The problems affected the major sources of energy but did not produce immediate, large-scale changes in American practices. Oil and natural gas supplied 70 percent of the nation's energy, but people did not cut back in their use of them or on the import of oil. Imports, in fact, continued to grow. Americans, after all, were addicted to the purchase and use of autos and other products. They had built a way of life around them.

Energy problems did intensify the debate over the future of the economy. "What may kill our society is energy disease," a distinguished nuclear physicist proclaimed, "a disorder which has attacked the organ in our industrial system that provides the economic body with the necessities of life." Many prophets predicted stagnation, decline, intense conflict, and authoritarian regimes. A few observers of the future, critics of major features of American life, as were many advocates of the crisis theory, challenged these prophecies with the suggestion that Americans could find happiness at a lower standard of living. A more widely endorsed challenge came from those who insisted that the potential supply of oil and natural gas was large enough to serve the nation's needs, and those of the world, for many years and Americans need only pay the prices required to encourage the industry to search for and develop new supplies. The grim forecasts were also challenged by those who insisted that science, technology, industry, and government would come to the rescue. They would promote conservation, provide more efficient ways of using energy, such as smaller automobiles and heavier reliance on railroads, mass transit, and bicycles, and develop adequate substitutes for oil and gas, including coal, shale, nuclear energy, and solar power, forms that their champions maintained could become available in abundant quantities, and had other virtues as well. Solar power, some proclaimed, was nonpolluting as well as inexhaustible and would not require huge power plants and giant energy companies. But pessimists countered that the automobile and oil companies would block necessary changes, the capital requirements could not be met, much time would be required to develop nuclear and solar energy, dependence on nuclear power would be extremely dangerous, and dependence on coal and shale would seriously damage the environment. Thus, battles over nuclear power plants and strip mining continued.

Some optimists called for institutional changes, some of revolutionary proportions. Some insisted that the nation could enjoy

a happy future if it destroyed the power of the oil companies, especially the "Seven Sisters": Exxon, Texaco, Mobil, Gulf, Standard Oil of California, Royal Dutch Shell, and British Petroleum. Since 1973, these companies had substantially increased both their profits and their power by acquiring coal and other energy properties. Subjecting the companies to congressional investigations, critics called for the development and use of antitrust powers, more government regulation, and the establishment of a government energy corporation. To other critics, the situation demanded the substitution of socialism for capitalism.

Obviously, not everyone had given up on growth. Critics of the doomsayers insisted that the earth could support much larger populations, that the energy crisis was only a consequence of bad policies, that resources would be abundant for centuries, that pollution could be controlled, and that the Third World could not be expected to remain poor or to become rich through force or benevolence. To such optimists, it still seemed possible that economic growth would eventually triumph over poverty. "The intent of the neo-Malthusians is didactic: they hope to shock us into changing our evil ways," a defender of the automobile suggested. "Only continued growth can begin to deliver. . . what the coming world will require by way of health, welfare, and human dignity."

If the economy of the future became a large question mark, so did relations among groups in American society, including blacks and whites, women and men. Because of the poor performance of the economy, the economic progress that blacks made in the 1960s was not duplicated in the 1970s, and the economic gap between whites and blacks remained substantial. In mid-decade, the median income for white families was above \$14,000, but for blacks it was close to \$9,000—and a higher percentage of black women and children had to contribute to family income; more than 30 percent of the blacks lived below the poverty line, but only 10 percent of the whites did so; more than 13 percent of the blacks were unemployed, while less than 7 percent of the white workers did not have jobs; black unemployment was especially high among teenagers. In addition, a disproportionate number of blacks worked in lower-income and lower-status jobs, and, while constituting more than 11 percent of the population, less than 2 percent of the blacks were doctors, lawyers, and professors. Obviously, racial discrimination in employment remained a fact of American life.



Another fact, racial segregation, was especially obvious in Northern residential patterns and school systems. Big-city schools were attended by a large and growing number of black children and were plagued by many problems, including drugs, violence, vandalism, and truancy. Many of the students were apathetic and unruly; they dropped out at a high rate; the achievement levels of those who graduated were well below the national average; few went on to college. Big-city streets were high crime areas; much of the trouble was created by black teenagers whom the police could not bring under control. In other words, inner city blacks who wanted a good education and safe streets were not served as well as people in other residential areas.

Many blacks needed help. A growing number of black families were headed by women: 37 percent in 1977, compared with 24 percent a decade earlier. A growing number of black births were illegitimate: 50 percent in 1976, compared with 26 percent in 1965. Fortunately for these women and children, they could turn to a welfare system that had grown enormously since 1960 and could supply funds for those who could not work and alternatives to dependence on intolerable jobs and intolerable marriages. Nearly 40 percent of the black children in 1977 received Federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children, a jump from 14 percent in 1961.

Many blacks were bitterly discontented and alienated. They expressed these attitudes in drug addiction, crime, the prison riot in Attica in 1971, the looting that erupted in New York City's electrical blackout in 1977. Blacks had continued to move from the rural South (and Puerto Ricans from their island) to New York City even though the number of jobs available there was shrinking.

On the other hand, "Jim Crow," the laws supporting and promoting segregation, discrimination, and disenfranchisement, had been destroyed by the civil rights movement. As a result, the black middle class, the people who had the required temperament, education, and money, had more opportunities open to them than ever before. Hotels, motels, restaurants, and other public facilities had been desegregated throughout the nation. Public schools, too, were desegregated, at least where neighborhoods housed both whites and blacks, and most whites now regarded the degree of integration that had developed as just. In 1960, 99 percent of the Southern black students attended all

black schools; in 1969, 50 percent did; three years later, only 8 percent did. Desegregation had been actively promoted by the Supreme Court, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, and the Justice Department, forcing whites who would not tolerate the change to flee to suburbs or establish private academies. In 1965, only 5 percent of the blacks of college age attended college, but 10 percent attended ten years later, and many more blacks were graduating from high school than had in the past.

The educational changes provided bases for others. There were more well-paying jobs available to young, educated, or skilled blacks, and, consequently, better housing than had been available only a short time earlier. The growing number of blacks on television, in corporate and government offices, on university faculties and administration, and in the labor movement testified to this change. Substantial increase in the number of black workers in the trades was additional proof. The results in jobs and housing were now accepted, even applauded, by most white Americans.

Actively participating in sports, an area to which Americans devoted much attention, time, and money, black athletes continued to dramatize (and often give an exaggerated impression of) the black advance. Most of the superstars of the 1970s were black: Henry Aaron, who broke Babe Ruth's home run record; Rod Carew, the greatest hitter since Ted Williams and Stan Musial; Kareem Abdul Jabbar, the towering center for the Milwaukee Bucks and the Los Angeles Lakers; and O. J. Simpson, who established a new rushing record in the National Football League (NFL). In another sport, boxing, Muhammad Ali was the giant of the decade. A few blacks became coaches in the American Basketball Association, managers in the American League, and quarterbacks in the NFL. One of the most striking features of the black sports picture was the prominence of blacks on teams in the Southeast and Southwest conferences, representing schools that had been all-white only a few years earlier.

Black participation in politics was another basic change. There were more than 4,300 blacks in elected offices by 1978, more than four times as many as a decade earlier. They included black mayors like Kenneth Gibson in Newark, Coleman Young in Detroit, Richard Hatcher in Gary, and Tom Bradley in Los Angeles. And, although blacks had trouble winning statewide

contests, blacks in Congress were sufficiently numerous to have their own caucus. They also had some influence in the executive branch, where, in Carter's early years, Wade H. McCree served as Solicitor General, Clifford L. Alexander was the first black Secretary of the Army, Mary Berry was the top official in Washington on educational matters, and Franklin Delano Raines served on the White House staff. But blacks did not have as much influence in the White House as they thought they deserved. Some, most notably Vernon Jordan of the Urban League, criticized Carter, reminding him that he would not be President if blacks had not voted for him in such large numbers and charging that he was not paying enough attention to the problems of black Americans. Blacks joined with white liberals in insisting that everyone had a right to a job, and that government must do more to increase the number of available jobs, which would counter the conservatives' embrace of the work ethic and criticism of welfare. To blacks, at least those who had not entered the middle class, unemployment rather than inflation was the more worrisome problem, and they now emphasized economic matters in their demands for further change.

Blacks had moved forward at an especially rapid pace in Southern politics, where the number of black voters doubled in the first thirteen years following passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. By 1971, Charles Evers had nerve enough to run for governor of Mississippi—and to campaign boldly. Moreover, he did so without encountering violence, although also without winning. During the decade, blacks won mayoral elections in Atlanta and New Orleans. By 1978, there were more than 2,000 blacks serving in state and local offices in the South. Julian Bond had been the only black legislator in Georgia in 1966; he was still there in 1978 but had twenty-three black colleagues. Ambitious white politicians in Georgia and other parts of the South had to pay attention to the black vote. Even Senator J. Strom Thurmond, once the Dixiecrat candidate for President, had to do so. Blacks, of course, as a minority with fewer economic resources and less political experience than whites, could not dominate Southern politics nor get all that they wanted from it, but they received more services than in the past and had a greater sense of personal security.

By the late 1970s, Andrew Young was the most conspicuous

representative of the political progress of Southern blacks. He, in fact, was quite conscious of what he represented. "We were protest and now we are *it*," he proclaimed to a largely black audience in 1977. The son of a dentist, a clergyman, and one of King's aides, Young, in 1972, had become the first black elected to Congress from Georgia since Reconstruction. In 1976, he allied with Jimmy Carter, helping him move to victory. The two men illustrated a new black-white coalition in the South that defeated Wallace and Ford. After Carter moved into the White House, Young emerged quickly as a prominent, outspoken, and controversial member of the administration, criticizing racism, advocating majority (black) rule in southern Africa, and proclaiming that the American civil rights movement contained lessons of value for black Africans.

All barriers to change in race relations had not been swept away. Racism remained a part of American thought, expressed by scholars such as William Schockley, a physicist who expounded a controversial theory linking IQ, heredity, and race, as well as groups like the Ku Klux Klan, and reflected in varying ways and degrees in the thinking of most, if not all, Americans. In places like Newark, where blacks had obtained power, white ethnic groups resented their new status and the ways in which blacks used their new power.

Throughout the nation, battles raged over the busing of school children from one neighborhood to another. For a long time, busing had been used to improve educational opportunities and had made possible the substitution of consolidated schools for "one-room" types. Advocates of change in race relations now insisted that busing was the only way of integrating schools or achieving "racial balance" in some areas. They were resisted by people who resented the long, time-consuming rides for children, preferring schools to mirror the segregation patterns that existed in housing arrangements. They doubted that school integration improved the academic performance of black children or the relations between the races and insisted that local communities should have power over their schools and not be deprived of it by court-ordered busing. Nearly all Americans opposed this method of achieving racial integration, but the buses continued to roll.

Other battles focused on "affirmative action" programs. Begun in the mid-sixties and promoted by HEW and other agencies, affirmative action required universities, corporations,

and other institutions to enroll or employ a certain percentage of blacks, among other groups, or, at the least, to hire a more vaguely defined number. Seeking to open doors previously closed or only narrowly opened, the programs were defended as necessary to overcome the results of past discrimination. Affirmative action programs were considered beneficial not only to individuals but to society, for they provided more black doctors, lawyers, managers, accountants, professors, and so forth. Advocates also pointed out that academic admission officers had traditionally, often for good reasons, considered more than grades and test scores. Critics, however, insisted that affirmative action was unfair to a new generation, forcing it to pay the price for crimes it had not committed. They claimed it violated the creed that individuals should be rewarded on the basis of their merits. Most Americans, including groups that had participated in the civil rights movement in the 1960s, criticized quotas and supported adherence to meritocratic standards, although favoring programs attacking discrimination and seeking to help disadvantaged groups compete more effectively. Jews recalled how they had suffered from quotas in the past; academicians worried about the lowering of standards; liberal critics generally insisted that the purpose of the civil rights movement had been to abolish racial classifications. Critics of affirmative action, including black critics, also maintained that it insulted blacks by suggesting that they must have preferential treatment to succeed, and that it would promote social decay by preventing the nation from making best use of its most talented people.

In 1977-1978, the Bakke case became a focal point of debate on this issue. Allan Bakke, a white denied admission to a University of California medical school, charged, in a case that reached the United States Supreme Court in 1977, that he had been victimized because of his race, that less qualified blacks, and others, had been admitted, and that he had a right to be considered as an individual on the basis of his own qualifications. He relied, as blacks had earlier, upon the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Carter administration was one of the groups upholding affirmative action in this case. In June 1978, the Supreme Court ruled that Bakke should be admitted but did not outlaw affirmative action, declaring that although too *much* weight had been given to race at the University of California, it could be *one* consideration in admission policies.

The pressure for change in race relations had not spent itself,

and other groups were imitating or echoing black behavior. Before the end of the 1960s, militant Mexican-Americans, a fast-growing segment of American society calling themselves Chicanos, had mounted a protest movement that resembled Black Power. One Mexican-American, Cesar Chavez, had begun to battle for the organization of workers on the corporate farms of California and Arizona. He put together a substantial union, the United Farm Workers of America, composed largely of Mexican-Americans and concerned with intangibles, like dignity, as well as with wages, hours, and working conditions. By the 1970s, the American Indians had also mounted a protest movement. Organized into groups like the American Indian Movement and using the slogan "Red Power," they staged demonstrations demanding the return of land, water and fishing rights, and tribal self-government. The movement achieved considerable success in the courts and produced strong reactions from whites. Various white ethnic groups also insisted upon their distinctiveness and value, engaged in searches for roots and community, and militantly identified with and defended their neighborhoods.

Black protest also influenced the relations between men and women, contributing to the rise of a movement advocating women's liberation from "sexism." The civil rights movement provided inspiration to women concerning goals and methods and challenged theories of the natural inferiority of certain people, the need to keep them in their "place," and the superiority of white males. Blacks affected women's liberation in a negative as well as positive way. During the protest movements of the 1960s, black and white males often expected women to occupy subordinate positions and perform services that, it was assumed, only women could perform. The experience encouraged female participants in protest movements to think about the plight of women.

Black protest was not the only force propelling the rise of a women's movement in the second half of the 1960s and on through the 1970s. The great increase in the employment of women since 1940 was also influential. Working women and other people who came into contact with them, including their daughters, provided models of what women could do. Their experiences broadened women's perspectives and increased their awareness of discrimination.

The women's movement developed its own ideology. The works of Betty Friedan, Kate Millett, and others included the argument that women had suffered a great setback after 1945 with the development of what Friedan called the "feminine mystique," which exalted the woman as homemaker and mother. The ideologists insisted that women must break out of their "prison" by developing interests outside the home. Assuming that homemakers were unhappy and eager for careers and that women were equal in ability to men in most job areas, the ideology called for an end to the subordination of women in the home, the schools, and the marketplace, radical modification of cultural stereotypes, the development of new community institutions like childcare centers, and a concerted campaign by women to develop lifelong commitments to the professions and business. The ideology was expressed not only in treatises and speeches but also in fiction and films that focused on the misery and frustration that women suffered from marriage, on men who both oppressed and neglected them, and on the possibility of liberation.

Although not a solid power bloc, the women's movement achieved a degree of unity around a set of demands. The movement contained reformers like Friedan, who founded the National Organization for Women in 1966, and Gloria Steinem, the publisher of *Ms.*, which first appeared on the newsstands in 1972. The movement also included Millett, Adrienne Rich, and other radicals. All participants demanded an end to discrimination in salaries, wages, and the variety of jobs open to women, equal representation in government, removal of discrimination against women in tax laws, the establishment of childcare centers, and the sharing of child-raising responsibilities by husbands and wives. The new feminists demanded change in the abortion laws, arguing that women should have the right to choose whether or not to bear a child and that those who needed government financial aid to obtain abortions had a right to it. And the militant women called for educational programs focusing on women, emphasizing their exploitation, and suggesting needed changes.

Participants varied in their attitudes toward men. All, of course, protested against what they agreed was male domination of American life, criticized many men for sexism, and portrayed women as exploited economically and sexually, selling labor and

sex for economic security and affluence. Many feminists, however, insisted that the relations between men and women often were beautiful, and that some men were also exploited and maintained that, while much that was classified as "women's work," like household chores and child raising, was classified by culture, not biology, there were biological bases for some differences between men and women. Others, however, expressed a negative view of men in general, referred disdainfully to "patriarchal history," and called for abolition of marriage and the family. Some blamed the culture for all the significant differences between men and women; some proclaimed that women could receive great sexual satisfaction without depending on men. Sigmund Freud, whose theories were interpreted as supporting male domination, was a frequent target of attack; doctrines of sexual freedom were interpreted by some as male schemes to overcome the traditional defenses of women; some feminists praised lesbianism. Others, however, while resenting emphasis on gratification of the male, preferred sexual relations with males, and some embraced doctrines of sexual freedom as ardently as any male devotee of the *Playboy* philosophy. Many criticized the notion that giving birth was woman's central experience and purpose; some protested against the role of the male doctor and the treatment of women in childbirth.

For some radical feminists, rape was much more than an ugly act committed by a small number of deranged men. It illustrated man's aggressiveness and was an instrument of control. It was, Susan Brownmiller charged, "nothing more or less than a continuous process of intimidation by which *all men* keep *all women* in a state of fear." Related to this view of rape was concern for battered wives, a crime that was considered evidence of male violence.

Participants in the women's movement also varied in their interpretation of the established political and economic system. To some, capitalism seemed responsible for exploitation, socialism offered the way out, and the movement was an effort to transform the whole society, not just to elevate women. Critical of women who had "made it" in America, radicals argued that the subjugation of women was not simply the result of long-standing customs and attitudes. It was, instead, a system deliberately perpetuated by the ruling class, and women must identify and ally with one another, ignore class lines, and refuse





*Leaders of the Women's Movement: Gloria Steinem, Bella Abzug, Shirley Chisholm, Betty Friedan (Wide World Photos)*

to conform to the required behavior in order to succeed in male-dominated circles. A few suggested that some early societies had been matriarchies and superior to male-governed societies. The United States, Adrienne Rich maintained, was "the most unmotherly of societies," and the women's movement was "struggling to recreate a more natural environment for the process of becoming . . . a human being."

Other feminists, however, embraced traditional capitalistic themes—the work ethic and the dream of success—and merely insisted that women should have the same chance to work and get ahead that men had. To do so, women had to be freed from their responsibilities to children and the home. In support of such arguments, feminists called upon anthropological and historical evidence to demonstrate that women had seldom been confined to the home and had, at times, exercised power, and they praised hard-working and successful women. The movement, Norman Podhoretz suggested, was chiefly responsible for the revival of the gospel of success, which had often been treated with contempt in the 1960s.

All participants demanded that women should be treated as complete human beings, not as a special type of human being. In addition to criticism of tendencies to confer authority on males and define certain tasks as women's work, these demands involved protests against being treated as sex objects. The attitudes were manifested in various ways, including new attention paid to athletics for women, a refusal to wear brassieres, protest against beauty contests and *Playboy*, the coining of terms such as Ms., chairwoman, and male chauvinism, and criticism of sexual harassment of women by their bosses.

Demanding change in women's status and role, the movement affected many aspects of American life. It encouraged women to get an education, and the percentage of women college students increased to over 50 percent by 1977. It encouraged women to seek jobs outside the home. As a result, women in the labor force increased from 40 percent in the late 1960s to 48 percent in 1976, and the increase in quantity was accompanied by improvements in the quality and variety of job opportunities for women. In addition, the movement was partially responsible for changes in family life: later marriages, fewer children, higher standards of living, some sharing of housework, tension over responsibilities for the home and the children, and an increase in the divorce rate. The trends persuaded some futurists that family life was doomed.

Feminism, of course, was not solely responsible for these developments. Other factors, many of them economic, also contributed. Economic need and desire was a powerful force behind the upsurge in working women in the 1970s. Over 65 percent of the women who worked were either single, widowed, divorced, or married to men who earned less than \$10,000 per year. Most newly divorced women had to work to support themselves and, often, their children. Many married women believed that inflation forced them to join their husbands in the work force in order for the family income to pay for the things they wanted. Expectations had been raised, and now two incomes per family were often required to fulfill goals as costs of housing, education, automobiles, and everything else rose rapidly.

Economics as well as the women's movement had a significant impact on the family. The corporation forced its upwardly mobile denizens to travel and move frequently, thereby imposing strains on family life. Inflation, unemployment, and poverty also

affected family life. Moreover, the welfare system encouraged the splitting up of families because it denied benefits when an unemployed father lived in the home. The continuing tendency to turn to experts for advice on a wide range of issues continued to transfer roles away from the family. Television, too, in both its programming and its commercials, affected the family by presenting images of family life that viewers could compare with their own realities.

The women's movement, along with other factors, affected social and economic life in America. It also influenced politics, an arena in which the movement participated strenuously. It played a prominent role in the Democratic National Convention, and demonstrated that it could make news and affect the thinking of people outside the women's organizations. A proposed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the Constitution, declaring that "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex," which had been bottled up in Congress since the 1920s, suddenly moved forward, passed by Congress in 1971-1972 by wide margins and ratified by thirty-four states by 1975. Several states liberalized their abortion laws; a decision by the United States Supreme Court in 1973 established the right to have an abortion, and the abortion rate moved above 1 million per year. Some states revised laws on rape, preventing defense lawyers from emphasizing the sexual history of victims, removed discriminatory features from other laws, and eased requirements for divorce. Government-mandated affirmative action programs affected women as well as blacks and other minority groups. Carter made major efforts to put women in significant positions and appointed two, Juanita Kreps and Patricia Harris, to his cabinet. Another woman, Patricia Derrian, was a leading figure in the human rights campaign, and still others, including Margaret Costanza, Anne Wexler, and Mary Berry, as well as the President's wife, played other important roles.

The movement did not, however, create a revolution. It encountered strong opposition from exponents of traditional ideas. Many men regarded it as threatening to ways of life they valued and their conceptions of themselves as men. They ridiculed the women who participated, put their own careers first, refused to take major responsibilities for housework, insisted that mothers must play the leading role in raising children, felt confused

about the ways in which they should treat women, and resented competition in tight job markets. University officials and professors criticized HEW's pressure on behalf of academic women, charging that it damaged the decision-making process and lowered standards.

Men were not the only opponents. The movement, composed chiefly of women in the professions, did not persuade all women to identify first with their own sex, to endorse the movement's proposals, and to take advantage of the fact that women constituted better than half of the population. Working-class women opposed the movement, for they wanted the protective legislation it wished to destroy. Many black women regarded feminism as diversionary or, at least, wanted protest to focus on racism as well as sexism. Some women of all classes and races believed in and liked the old order, including being treated as sex objects. "Don't Liberate Me, Love Me" was the theme of a Tammy Wynette hit song.

Many people disliked the hostility toward the family, including people of the left, like Christopher Lasch, as well as less radical types, such as Michael Novak and Midge Decter. Champions of the family, many of whom were distressed by the performances of the public schools and other public institutions, portrayed it as a refuge and a source of strength, discipline, and development. Some, such as George Gilder and Steven Goldberg, insisted that men "needed" to be the family's main source of income and to have their natural aggressiveness tamed or channeled by women and responsibility, while most women "needed" to devote themselves to the home. Selma Fraiberg, among others, insisted that mothers, not agencies, must care for their children.

Two movements offered especially vigorous resistance to the new feminism. One was spearheaded by Phyllis Schlafly, an articulate champion of traditional ideas about woman's place and role. Viewing ERA as a symbol of the attack on old values, she battled against it, warning that women would be forced to engage in hard labor and fight wars. The other counterforce, the "right-to-life" movement, focused on abortion and had the support of Catholics, Mormons, other religious groups, and conservative political organizations. They stressed the virtues of raising children and reacted in horror against what they defined as murder. This movement pressed for laws outlawing abortion,

including a constitutional amendment. They lobbied vigorously, frequently employed nonviolent demonstrations, occasionally turned to violence.

The forces of resistance as well as the forces of change influenced the politics of the period. The Presidents expressed opposition to some demands of the women's movement, including childcare centers and abortions. Congress, supported by President Carter, Secretary Califano, and the Supreme Court, restricted the use of public funds for abortions, making it difficult for the poor to obtain them. By 1978, the ERA had been defeated in several states, was three short of the thirty-eight required for ratification, and, though supported by Lady Bird Johnson, Betty Ford, and Rosalynn Carter, seemed headed for failure by the March 1979 deadline. Nearly three-fourths of the population had approved of ERA in 1974, but only slightly more than 50 percent did so by 1978. Its plight persuaded the reformers in the women's movement to promote a boycott of the states that had refused to ratify, to press for postponement of the deadline, and to broaden their appeal to the full range of women.

Although change had taken place in the relations between men and women, many conditions remained the same. By the late seventies, less than 3 percent of the directors of major corporations and fewer than 20 percent of those earning Ph.D.s or obtaining degrees in medicine and law each year were women. And the earnings of the average working woman were only 62 percent of the earnings of the average working man. Changes had taken place in attitudes and practices, and pressure for more continued to build, but resistance was also substantial.

Sexual relations between men and women were also changing. In fact, the signs were so numerous that many observers spoke of a "sexual revolution." Yet, that term exaggerated the rate and amount of change. A shift in attitudes had been apparent since at least the 1920s, when the "double standard" was attacked. Many middle-class girls and women demanded a new freedom comparable to that enjoyed by middle-class boys and men; they talked about sexual matters more than they had earlier and became more active sexually. Alfred Kinsey revealed that the "revolution" had reached a rather advanced stage by the 1940s, and his reports in 1948 and 1953 promoted further liberalization of attitudes and practices and additional research. Fur-

thermore, change in this area of life still had many foes who placed limits on it. The development, in other words, was evolutionary, rather than revolutionary.

Many Americans of the 1960s and 1970s did rebel against the old morality. Affluence contributed, reducing the pressure to repress sex in the interest of work and supplying funds for many forms of rebellion. Boredom was also a factor, with the sexual frontier being one of the few areas of adventure open to many Americans. The decline of authority of church and state and the demand for personal freedom were other factors. The importance of geographical mobility in American life contributed in obvious ways. Technology, too, played a role, supplying the contraceptive pill, which was widely available, easily used, and reduced the risk of conception.

The media both reflected and promoted the rebellion. Modifications in the pornography laws facilitated publication of works dealing explicitly with sexual activities. It enabled people to read once hard-to-get books by Henry Miller and others and new books by Phillip Roth, Erica Jong, and many more writers. The forces of change were represented somewhat cautiously by the widely read *Playboy* magazine, which had been founded in 1954, and in unrestrained ways by magazines such as *Hustler*, which were readily available by the mid seventies. Nudity and sexual activity in plays and movies, like *Hair*, *Oh! Calcutta*, *Last Tango in Paris*, *Deep Throat*, *Carnal Knowledge*, and *Pretty Baby*, also testified to change. Popular songs dealing with sex in undisguised ways were also signs of change. "Nobody does it better," Carly Simon proclaimed in a popular song that implied a rather wide range of experience and suggested that sexual performances were being graded, and women with abundant experience, like Mrs. Miller, the prostitute in *Klute*, and Katie Elder, appeared frequently in films. Some sexologists declared that women's liberation must extend to the sexual sphere, for women, unlike men, are by nature sexually insatiable and should no longer be sexually repressed by men. A growing number of books, including *The Human Sexual Response*, *The Sensuous Woman*, *The Joy of Sex*, *Open Marriage*, *The Hite Report*, recommended sexual freedom and experimentation, offered advice on ways of achieving sexual pleasure, and insisted that whatever gives such pleasure is acceptable. The press frequently counselled "sexually active" youngsters and adults about ways to

avoid pregnancy and disease. Television paid increasing attention to sex in programs like "Three's Company," "Soap," "79 Park Avenue," "Loose Change," and many others. The rebellion even affected cheerleading at football games when, as *Newsweek* put it, "the Dallas crew turned in its fringed skirts for hot pants and halters," in 1974 and "TV viewers suddenly had cleavage to go with carnage."

A great deal of evidence indicated that the rebellion was more than verbal and visual. Despite the pill, the percentage of births that were illegitimate pointed to an increase in premarital and extramarital intercourse. The number of unmarried people who lived together rose from 664,000 in 1970 to at least 1.3 million in 1977, and some people experimented with group marriages and mate swapping.

The emergence of "gay liberation" supplied additional evidence of change. The movement assumed that homosexuals were natural, normal, well-adjusted individuals, committed to their sexual orientation and fully capable of success. The movement also assumed that gays were oppressed and needed emancipation. It advocated tolerance and even a positive public attitude toward homosexuality; it tried to persuade society to look upon it as morally equal to heterosexuality and to gain for gays the opportunity to live open, less secret, more self-confident lives. Some participants in the movement were militantly hostile toward members of the opposite sex. Some viewed lesbianism as an essential part of women's liberation. In response to pressure from gay liberation, some communities, states, government agencies, and corporations changed their laws and practices, becoming more tolerant and protective and less discriminatory or proclaiming nondiscriminatory policies. The media began to treat homosexuality more favorably, rather than ignoring it or portraying it as a sickness. Several congressmen sponsored a gay rights amendment to the Civil Rights Act, and 70 percent of the people testified to pollsters that they believed that there should be no laws regulating sexual practices.

Changes in sexual attitudes also encountered the forces of tradition and resistance. Most of the experiments in group marriage and mate swapping did not last long, for few of the participants were free of jealousy. Some men, convinced that men should control sexual relations, were alarmed by sexually aggressive women. Moreover, the praise of excellence in sexual perfor-

mance coupled with the advice on how to achieve it generated anxieties. "Men are aware they are being graded," a young woman reported, "and by God, they try to measure up." Some who tried discovered that they could not easily shake off the past.

The forces of resistance affected government and other institutions. Following a Supreme Court decision, in 1973, allowing communities to set their own standards of obscenity, actors, publishers, including *Hustler's* Larry Flynt, and others were arrested and convicted for violations of state or local obscenity laws. In many parts of the country, campaigns developed against pornography—against massage parlors, "adult" bookstores and theaters, magazines like *Screw* and *Smut*, the advertising promoting them, and other features of the revolution—against what some called "sex pollution." There was also a loud outcry against sex on TV, from religious groups like the Southern Baptist Convention and from parents. The outcry was not surprising, given television's wide reach and its large place in family life. The pressure, demanding "responsible" treatment of sex, focused on the advertisers and caused the industry to pull back somewhat. Many people, including President Carter, criticized unmarried couples who were living together, expressing concern that the practice was sinful and weakened marriage. Discrimination against homosexuals persisted in many areas. Defended on the grounds that teachers and others should be good models, critics claimed that society had an obligation to protect its values and traditions. Most Americans disapproved of homosexuality, regarded the gay life as a life of misery, wished to maintain the invisibility of this minority group, and believed that homosexuals should not become judges, public officials, policemen, physicians, and teachers. Many traditionalists continued to proscribe all but a few sexual practices and to insist that sexual pleasure must be linked with love and procreation.

Some intellectuals challenged the champions of revolution, insisting that sexual change would not produce utopia but would only trivialize and debase sex. "What happens when sex is liberated is not equality but a vast intensification of sexual competition . . . in which the only sure result is an ever larger band of vindictive losers. . . . Such 'liberation' makes criminals out of many men and deprives ever larger numbers of men and women alike of the essentials of human dignity and love," George Gilder argued. "The ending of sexual repression could



unravel the web of culture," J. M. Cameron suggested. "The characteristic of the 'singles' today is not the sexual freedom they supposedly enjoy, but the fact that this freedom is a deception," Henry Fairlie insisted. "They are free only with a fraction of their natures. The full array of human emotions is hardly involved."

In 1977, a former beauty queen, Anita Bryant, emerged as a prominent champion of the old morality. A devout Baptist and a public relations person, Mrs. Bryant was concerned about America's "decadence, moral decay and permissiveness." She became known to some as "the Carry Nation of the sexual counter-revolution" as a result of her successful leadership to "Save Our Children," a campaign designed to repeal a new Miami ordinance banning discrimination against gays. Arguing that such laws encouraged the spread of homosexuality and discouraged homosexuals from changing their sexual practices, she expanded her campaign to other parts of the country and changed the name of her fundamentalist-backed group to Protect America's Children. Her efforts were duplicated by others, many of them also fundamentalists, who battled, often successfully, for the repeal of gay rights ordinances in Wichita, Eugene, St. Paul, and other communities and persuaded the Oklahoma legislature to pass a law allowing school districts to fire homosexual teachers.

The forces of change did not crumble before the opposition. Gays, in fact, became politically more active on behalf of their claims, and they received some intellectual support from a study published in 1978 by the Institute for Sex Research that Kinsey had founded. Soon after Anita Bryant's victory in Miami, several city and county governments added laws protecting homosexual rights. Sexual attitudes and practices seemed likely to continue to evolve but not without resistance.

In a totally different area—the nation's relations with the rest of the world—the forces of change and the forces of resistance were also at work. If change succeeded, the distinguishing feature of the period since the early 1940s—the global role of the United States—could be destroyed. American thinking about foreign affairs was being affected by the "lessons" of the 1960s, just as earlier it had been influenced by the "lessons" of the 1930s. A "Vietnam analogy" competed with a "Munich analogy" and suggested the dangers and high costs of involvement, rather than the risks of isolation, and the risks of using force, rather than the dangers of refusing to use it.

Isolationist attitudes had more strength in the mid-1970s than they had had for many years, although few, if any, people called themselves isolationists. Influenced by the American defeat in Vietnam and embracing a negative view of the war, many Americans now insisted that the United States must not go to war again unless it was attacked. They questioned all commitments, especially those with "non-free" regimes, and all overseas activity. "If we learned anything from our experience in Vietnam," Senator Birch Bayh declared, "it is the folly of permitting a cold-war mentality to lead us to choose sides in an internal conflict in a remote corner of Africa which presents no real threat to our national security or to our vital interests." Others spoke in similar terms of the "lessons of Vietnam" and the need to avoid "that mistake this time."

Critics of America's global role subjected the instruments of involvement—the military, the Central Intelligence Agency, the multinationals—to sharp attack. The military was criticized for urging increased military expenditures, rather than allowing them to drop after American participation in Vietnam had ended, and military power and military men were distrusted by many and condemned by some as inherently evil. Every proposal for new weapons or increased military spending encountered widespread opposition, and the American military establishment was portrayed as the main obstacle to nuclear disarmament.

The CIA also had many critics. It was attacked for violating the rights of Americans, by intercepting mail and other practices, for manipulating publications and organizations, such as *Encounter* and the National Student Association, and for interfering in the politics of other nations, including Cuba and Chile. Some critics charged that the "company" had engineered Kennedy's assassination and Nixon's downfall. Others suggested that it had triggered Kennedy's death by its own plots to kill Castro, and many maintained that the CIA, along with the FBI, was the chief threat to American liberty. Its critics frequently proposed that it must become a mere intelligence-gathering and analyzing agency. A few called for its abolition. "What we are talking about is the action arm of the Imperial President," wrote Garry Wills. "The CIA polices the colonies for our Emperor." The more radical I. F. Stone called the CIA and related agencies "janisseries of property."

In addition to the military and the CIA, the critics now, like

the isolationists of the 1930s, attacked economic groups. The multinational corporations, such as the International Telephone and Telegraph Company (ITT), were often blamed for the extensive role that the nation was playing as well as for the methods they employed. American foreign policy, it seemed, was not designed to protect freedom and democracy or real *national* interests but was designed to protect and promote the foreign investments of these giants, which totaled \$119 billion by 1974. The multinationals used various methods, including bribery or subsidies, to influence the politics of the countries in which they operated, like Chile where ITT and the CIA worked together against a Marxist, Salvatore Allende, who eventually became the victim of a military coup in 1973. The arms producers, like Lockheed, Litton, Northrop, and Grumman, were criticized for their practices at home and abroad, including large "cost overruns," deception, lobbying, alliances with the armed forces, and campaign contributions. Investigators revealed that in pursuit of foreign sales, these companies bribed and paid kickbacks to foreign officials in hopes of competing more effectively against French merchants and others active in the sales of arms. American arms sales soared after 1973, rising above the dollar value of wheat exports and going mainly to Third World countries. Defenders claimed that the United States derived both political and economic benefits from the sales, but critics charged that they caused wars. They demanded that the United States take the lead in ending the arms trade, and that the firms should be converted to nonmilitary production.

The old isolationist argument that involvement abroad would corrupt the nation had emerged once again—but with a twist. Now, the charge was that involvement *had* corrupted the nation. Moreover, the evidence was substantial. Such a corrupt nation, the argument went, could not be permitted to play the leader's role in the world and should not even be permitted to maintain access to the resources it needed to sustain its way of life. Whatever power it had in international affairs was destined to be used for undesirable purposes. Many opponents of a large American role expressed, in one critic's description, "a virulence of tone—a kind of bile which seems to spring from self-doubt into self-hate."

Related to the negative view of the United States was great sympathy for the Third World, which was portrayed as the

victim of misdeeds by Americans and other Westerners. The United States, critics maintained, should no longer use its power to interfere with movements of "national liberation" and other activities in the Third World that could establish a "new international economic order." Concerned about inequality in the distribution of wealth and income among the parts of the world, advocates of a new order insisted that rich nations must reduce such inequalities or face a violent upheaval. According to this view, inequality was a consequence of exploitation that had begun with colonialism but persisted after independence. Now the West must end exploitation and make amends, and the Third World must gain genuine independence.

Much of the criticism of America's global activities came from liberals. Although there had been many liberal isolationists in the 1930s, most liberals of the 1940s, 1950s, and much of the 1960s had been champions of a large role in world affairs. They had been alarmed by the power and ambitions of Hitler's Germany and, later, of the Soviet Union. Now, many liberals insisted that Russia, recognizing the dangers and costs of the arms trade and the new complexity of the international situation, was cautious in its international behavior and eager to concentrate on domestic affairs.

George Kennan, who had helped define the American role after World War II, now expressed many of these ideas. While the Russians no longer alarmed him, he found many aspects of American behavior, such as arms sales, covert operations by the CIA, and the like, frightening. He doubted that the United States could function effectively in southern Africa and many other places or that it needed to, and he advocated "the reduction of external commitments to the indispensable minimum," that is, to Western Europe, Japan, and Israel, a proposal that one of his critics labelled a "strategy of qualified isolationism."

The growing complexity of international affairs figured prominently in the proposal for a smaller American role in world relations. "Neither the United States or any other great power can any longer play the controlling role in world politics," Christopher Lasch insisted. "We came to take for granted a state of affairs that was as unnatural as it was flattering to our pride," Ronald Steel maintained. "The American foreign policy elite has been defeated . . . by the complexities of the world about it," argued Edmund Stillman.

Some critics of American behavior abroad criticized sports, especially football. Football had boomed in the period of American expansion in world affairs, and some commentators saw it as a reflection and a promoter of the militaristic and violent values they associated with the American role in the world. Some found superior virtues in baseball, which enjoyed a sharp rise in attendance in the 1970s. Athletic critics of American culture, such as Jack Scott, Dave Meggysey, and Chip Oliver, attempted to promote a "sports revolution" that would free athletes from exploitation and regimentation and athletics from violence, sexism, racism, competition, and the emphasis on winning.

A number of critics of America's global role believed that too many Americans, including too many in positions of power, had not learned the lessons of Vietnam. They ignored the meaning of the experiences and refused not only to learn from the past but to make the necessary break from it. Such people, like Kissinger, were still eager for the United States to provide leadership for the world. Some intellectuals, Steel suggested, were "experiencing withdrawal symptoms at the erosion of America's imperial role."

The advocates of change had many opponents, including Senator Henry Jackson, a Democrat from Washington state; Norman Podhoretz, the editor of *Commentary*; the Committee on the Present Danger; the Coalition for a Democratic Majority; and the Center for Strategic and International Studies. Distressed by the negative view of the United States expressed by advocates of withdrawal, they opposed large-scale changes in the American role. They still believed that the rest of the world was important to the United States and placed a high value on American power, including military power. Often buttressing their arguments with counsel about the imperfections of human affairs and the possibility of using power for good as well as evil, they also continued to believe in the importance of the presidency and regretted the attack upon it. Some felt that the American position in the world had deteriorated significantly. They bemoaned the sharp drop in military spending, measured in terms of the value of the dollar, the size of the GNP, and the total amount of government spending. Worried about the "costs of weakness," they insisted that the "existence of military force has not caused us to enter wars" and that "reducing it will not make it less likely that we will have to fight them."

The opponents of change still feared Russia and believed

that American resistance—the containment policy—continued to be important. They remained convinced that Russia would gain influence, perhaps control, of the areas from which the United States withdrew, were alarmed by Communist progress in Western Europe and Africa, insisted that, although it had failed in Vietnam, containment had succeeded in the most important places—in Western Europe and Japan. Some feared that the United States would appease Russia as Chamberlain had appeased Hitler. Podhoretz, who still believed that the 1930s taught lessons of significance and feared the influence of Vietnam, called for “the realization that the democratic world is under seige, the conviction that it is worth defending, and the understanding that American power is indispensable to its defense.” Deploring the weaknesses that he saw in the United States’ policy toward Africa, Bayard Rustin, a veteran civil rights leader, maintained that the United States must “decide whether it intends to remain the leader of the West and a world power fulfilling its obligations as the only country capable of deterring Soviet expansion.”

Concern about the fate of Israel, as well as worry about the Soviet Union and Communism, contributed to the defense of a large and strong American role. It seemed inconsistent to proclaim support for Israel and at the same time call for cuts in American military spending. Such cuts, Edward N. Luttwak argued, “could seriously damage America’s capacity to deter Russian activism in the world at large, including the Middle East; they could even undermine America’s ability to supply Israel with the weapons, ammunition, and high technology it needs for its survival.”

The issue of America’s role in the world was linked, of course, with the energy crisis. In fact, the oil-price controversy was seen by some as a symptom of American decline. Luttwak suggested that “without the prior weakening of America’s perceived ability to punish enemies and support friends, the oil cartel would never have dared to do what it did.” A few participants in the debates over both energy and the American role offered armed intervention in the Middle East as a solution. But most Americans, in and out of government, appeared to regard such a move as unacceptable, at least until the situation became much more serious.

Some commentators suggested that food was the “ace” up

America's sleeve, the nation's "secret weapon" that would maintain American power. "Food," Ford's Secretary of Agriculture insisted, "is a tool in the kit of American diplomacy." Eliot Janeway, a commentator on economic matters, predicted a worldwide struggle of "agripower against petropower." According to some, food was even a greater necessity than was oil, and it could exert a decisive influence on the world in the near future. And the United States was the world's most spectacular food producer.

By the late 1970s, the American role in the world was difficult to define. Clearly Carter, although he had grown up in the 1930s and early 1940s and had served in the navy during the years of World War II and the establishment of containment, had been influenced by the mood of withdrawal. In addition, even though they had served in the Kennedy and Johnson administrations and had supported their policies in Vietnam, many of the men Carter appointed to the top spots in the international and military affairs had been affected by the American failure in Vietnam and by detente. Furthermore, the second-line positions were filled by younger people who were haunted by Vietnam, highly critical of past policies, and closer to McGovern than to Jackson in point of view. Secretary Brown indicated just before taking office that he had learned from Vietnam that "we must become more cautious about . . . interventions." Carter, according to observers, had, by then, "made it abundantly clear that the United States ought not to go plunging militarily into underdeveloped countries." Soon after taking office, he praised the nation for having overcome its "inordinate fear of Communism," and Andrew Young suggested that the administration rejected "military activism."

Furthermore, Carter responded to the concern about the corruption of America with a crusade for human rights, hoping that thereby the United States would "regain the moral stature we once had. We've been through some sordid and embarrassing years recently," he explained, "and I felt like it was time for our country to hold a beacon light . . . that would rally our citizens to a cause." But was this a response to criticism of past practices as much as it was a basis for renewed activism? "In a nation supposedly instructed in its limitations by its recent failures," one of Carter's critics charged, "Jimmy Carter . . . has demonstrated how little America has learned." He expressed

"that traditional American delusion that, if only America can devise the right . . . formula, then the world will stop being what it is, and become what we wish it to be."

In any event, Carter had difficulty maintaining a firm course on human rights, and he backed away from other positions under the pressure of events. He made concessions to demands for more military spending and more activity in Africa and became less critical of arms sales. He both responded to criticism of the CIA and sought to restore and maintain its effectiveness, regarding it as an essential instrument that had been misused. Critics, including Kissinger and the Republican senators, found Carter weak and ineffective as well as confusing and confused. They suggested that his administration had "seen that its neat theories about the world do not fit the difficult realities" and that "it must now come to grips with the world as it is." But by mid-1978, one close observer suggested that such a change was taking place. While "many of our politicians, more traumatized than instructed by that miserable war [Vietnam], tend to see Vietnams everywhere," more and more congressmen, Meg Greenfield observed, "seem . . . to be getting bored with their own post-Vietnam bemusement," and "under great provocation from abroad, Carter himself is beginning to move."

Thus, it appeared that a new synthesis was dominating thought and action. The editor of *Foreign Affairs* insisted:

Understanding our limitations and correcting our mistakes . . . does not indicate weakness. . . . By cutting our losses in Indochina, we have taken firm steps toward restoring a realistic foreign policy. . . . The United States, far from retreating into neo-isolationist positions, far from showing any disposition toward appeasement of real or presumed threats to its security or power, eagerly seeks to play the leading role upon the global stage.

Another critic of those who maintained that the United States was "moving too far away from the experience and wisdom that came from World War II and the following years" and retreating "into innocence and a figurative isolationism" suggested that "a new hardline consensus" was forming. And a student of public opinion reported, in 1978, that in the past three years "the pendulum has started to swing back from the semi-isolationism of the early 1970s toward a new form of internationalism." It



accepted the idea that "the country must play an active leadership role on the international stage," but, "seared by Vietnam," rejected "the crusading spirit of the 1950s and early 1960s," did not "desire to remake the world in our image nor to act as the world's leading gendarme," was "more selective and wary of military entanglements where U.S. security interests are not believed to be critically involved" and was determined to avoid "another Vietnam."

Nevertheless, when those who remember the 1930s and 1940s are gone and a new generation comes to power with its insights about foreign affairs based in the 1960s, the United States may concentrate only on its "own affairs" and cease to be a global power. For many younger Americans especially, Guenter Lewy writes, "The American role in Vietnam appears to stand as the epitome of evil in the modern world." With their attitudes profoundly shaped by the war, the Vietnam generation seems likely to use power differently than the World War II generation. And if the former comes to office after economic stagnation or decline has set in, it may not have much power to use. American strength, after all, heavily depends on the productivity of the American economy, and, thus, if economic decline is to be a feature of the American future, the nation's role in the world will be forced to shrink.

Perhaps, however, forces inside and outside the United States will not permit the nation to retreat significantly from international affairs. The need to maintain access to oil and other resources could be one of those forces, pressuring the United States into action in order to avoid economic decline. Weaknesses in and threats to Western Europe and Japan could function in a similar way.

Perhaps, the nation will embrace a middle-ground philosophy between globalism and isolationism, drawing upon both the lessons of the 1930s and the lessons of the 1960s and doing so, conceivably, as a result of historical study. Such a point of view would be sensitive to the dangers of both globalism and isolationism. Recognizing limits on American power, it would not give up the exercise of it altogether.

Is a new America, one that radically differs from the America of the past, now taking shape? Will America become an economically stagnant nation, or worse? Will it become an equalitarian nation, perhaps with men and women, whites and other races,

sharing a shrinking product? Will it perhaps devote more attention to sexual activities than, say, to economic affairs? Will it play only a small role in world affairs, perhaps even trying to isolate itself? The study of history does not enable us to answer these questions confidently, for it does not show us the choices that will be made. Yet, the study of history can alert us to the forces that are swirling around and playing upon us, and it can help us make those choices by bringing us into contact with a variety of human experiences.

To paraphrase two pioneers in the study of recent history, James Harvey Robinson and Charles A. Beard, the aim of this book has been to enable readers to catch up with their own times and to read intelligently the daily paper. The book was designed to help readers understand the situation in which they now find themselves by showing how its elements took shape. One of the controlling assumptions had been the conviction that, if we are to develop a desirable future, we need the perspective on the present that only the historical approach can provide.

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